NEW METHO
BOOK BINDE

ROSE HAWTHORNE LATHROP AS SHE BEGAN HER WORK

THE SAINT MARY COLLEGE
LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS

MOTHER ALPHONSA

ROSE HAWTHORNE LATHROP

BY

JAMES J. WALSH

M.D., PH.D., LITT.D.

NEW YORK

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1930

8865

Nihil Obstat

ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D.,
Censor Librorum.

Imprimatur

✠ PATRICK CARDINAL HAYES,
Archbishop, New York.

New York, April 11, 1930.

COPYRIGHT, 1930,
BY THE MACMILLAN COMPANY.

All rights reserved—no part of this book may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the publisher.

BX
4705
L35
W3

SET UP BY BROWN BROTHERS LINOTYPERS
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY THE FERRIS PRINTING COMPANY

8537
1

TO

MOTHER ROSE HUBER

MOTHER ALPHONSA'S EARLIEST COMPANION
AND HER CHOSEN SUCCESSOR

INTRODUCTION

In September, 1894, Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, the younger daughter of Nathaniel Hawthorne, whom the literary friends of her father used to call "the Rose of all the Hawthornes," rented a little flat of three rooms and a kitchen at 668 Water Street, on the Lower East Side of New York. This was in the heart of a very poor neighborhood and Mrs. Lathrop's idea in locating there was to help some of the destitute poor who were suffering from incurable cancer to bear the pains and trials through which they had to go before death came to relieve them. She took several cancer patients to live in this little apartment with her, she received others at certain times during the day in her own room so as to dress their lesions, and she visited as many more in their homes as her time and strength would permit her to attend. This was the beginning of a work that occupied the next thirty-two years of her life until her death in 1926. That work is one of the most appealing episodes in American life.

During the twenty years preceding this, she had lived in rather intimate touch with literary circles in New York. She had been a favorite visitor at what is said to have been the only successful salon New York ever had, that of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Watson Gilder. She had devoted herself to literary work of all kinds, had had some short stories published and magazine editors asked for more.

She had published a little volume of poems *Along the Shore*.[1] Above all she had assisted in the publication of the autograph edition of her father's works in twenty-two volumes which is the most complete edition of Hawthorne that we have. She had written a general introduction to the work. Besides she had already edited for publication *Memories of Hawthorne* which was to appear in *The Atlantic Monthly* the year after she took up her work for the cancer poor. This was published in book form in 1897.[2] She was making more than a conventional literary success and acquiring prestige in the literary world, most of which, however, was due to the fact that she was Hawthorne's daughter.

In 1893 with her husband, George Parsons Lathrop, she had become a convert to the Catholic Church and was stimulated by her conversion to devote her life in some way to the benefit of others. She did not want merely to write about life, as she said to me in after years, she wanted to live it and above all to devote herself during the years that were left to her to some task that would give to human existence a meaning in terms of another world than this.

By chance as some would say, Providentially as one would surely be led to think from the event, a dear friend of Mrs. Lathrop's just at this time died of cancer. She came to realize in the course of her friend's affliction with its inevitable progress toward death, how much of suffering was involved in this saddest of terminations of human existence. With her attention thus called to it, she came to appreciate how frequent cancer had become in modern

[1] Ticknor & Co., Boston, 1898.
[2] Riverside Press.

life. She herself has told the story of the effect of her friend's illness and death on her better than any one else could, and fortunately we have that story in her own words and have been able to present it in the chapter, "A Hawthorne Legacy."

Not long after the death of her literary friend from the dread disease, Mrs. Lathrop came to know rather intimately the case of a poor seamstress who after an operation for cancer, could no longer be kept in the hospital because hospitals are places for the treatment of patients for whom there is some hope of cure. This was an incurable case, as nearly all cancer cases become after a time, and there was nothing to do except wait in whatever patience the sufferer could summon up, for the inevitable death that might be but weeks yet might be months or even a year or more away.

Mrs. Lathrop's literary friend had fortunately all the advantages which the possession of money can give in the matter of securing relief through that skilled attendance which makes even the progress of disease toward an inevitable fatal termination ever so much less painful and disturbing for mind and body. The little seamstress, however, soon exhausted her small savings of a lifetime and there was nothing for her to do but go to the poorhouse. She was the daughter of well-to-do people in reduced circumstances, she had received a good preliminary education, she was clever at her trade, and had always associated with refined and cultivated people. She was in every sense of the word a gentlewoman, but there was nothing for her to do now except to take her place among the paupers and wait for death. It is hard enough to die of cancer with the specter of the awful disease hanging

over one, as the climax to the trials of life, but to have to die in the poorhouse adds a culminating element of misery even to these very trying conditions.

As Mrs. Lathrop's attention was attracted more and more to the situation which had developed in city life among the poor as a result of this serious disease, she began to realize that cancer, instead of being a rather rare disease as most people were then inclined to think it, was not at all infrequent. There was almost a conspiracy of silence with regard to the affliction because a good many people were very much inclined to think that the disease was hereditary or at least had a tendency to run in families. Besides, the interest in cancer as a seriously fatal disease was more than a little overshadowed by the expectation that its cause would very soon be discovered and the ravages of the disease greatly lessened or, as had been true of so many serious diseases in that great developmental period of bacteriology, definitely eradicated.

Unfortunately the disease was destined to prove down to our own day an insoluble problem. Instead of decreasing it has increased in frequency and fatality.[3] Mrs.

[3] The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has, while this book was in preparation, published a report showing that there has been a small but insistent increase in mortality from cancer during the last three decades and that the cancer situation is becoming graver year by year. This confirms the report a few years ago of the United States Public Health Bureau. Deaths from cancer in women have shown a significant upward trend during the twentieth century. The Metropolitan statistics show that "the situation for males is much graver than for females since the increase of death from cancer among the former has been three times as great as among the latter." . . . "There is no evidence of a significant decline in the death rate from cancer of any organ or part of the body."

Lathrop looked around her and very soon came to the realization that in a city like New York there were a great many destitute cancer patients. Literally hundreds of them at any given time were dying under the most trying circumstances. They could not be kept in public hospitals, as has been said, because hospital beds are needed for the treatment of patients suffering from diseases that can be benefited by medical or surgical care, so the cancer patients either had to go to their homes or to the poorhouse. At that time there was among the poor of the city as of most cities a great dread of the poorhouse. About the middle of the nineteenth century all public institutions for the care of the destitute and ailing were in an extremely neglected condition. For two centuries before that, as Miss Nutting and Miss Dock tell us in their *History of Nursing,* hospitals and related institutions had been running down until they were a disgrace to humanity. Reforms began to be made toward the end of the nineteenth century but not until well on in the last quarter, so it is not surprising that the old dreads still continued by tradition to occupy the minds of the poor and the very thought of the poorhouse was enough to make them feel that any question of their removal to it meant complete abandonment by their friends. The alternative was their home. This was, however, often extremely uncomfortable, squalid sometimes to the last degree and utterly unsuitable for continuous occupation by those who were bedridden and had no opportunity to get out into the fresh air. Tenement-house laws have made the condition of life among the poor ever so much better in the crowded quarters of New York City than they were at the end of the nineteenth century,

though even yet they are bad enough, as any one at all familiar with them is sure to know. When Rose Hawthorne Lathrop began her work, legislation had only just commenced to bring about the reforms which have made life so much more livable in the poorer quarters.

It was not only the squalor of their surroundings that made life so miserable for these cancer patients but it was the conditions under which they had to live. Very often they had to be alone in their homes during the livelong day. This was particularly the case when wages were so much lower than they are now because all the adult and adolescent members of the household had to be at work and all the younger members at school. It is bad enough to feel the poignant discomforts of disease which is gradually but inevitably sapping life, but to be compelled during weeks and perhaps months to be alone for all the long hours of the day with no one to afford relief or diversion of mind, that is torment indeed. As a rule in these cases symptoms grew worse from day to day until death was welcomed as a happy escape from intolerable conditions of existence. The poor bore the suffering well; almost without exception they faced the increasing pain very bravely until Providence set the term by death.

It was for these extremely pitiable patients of whom there were many hundreds at the time in the poorer districts of New York City, that Rose Hawthorne Lathrop proposed to work. She did not expect to solve the problem of cancer and its care. Her only hope was to enable a few cancer patients under her immediate ministrations to die happier as the result of her interest in them. The inspiration thus to sacrifice herself for the sake of one of

the great evils in the world, was typically Hawthornesque, but she went about the fulfillment of her resolution as simply and straightforwardly as might have been expected of a daughter of her very practically minded mother.

First, she needed training in the care of such patients so as to be sure that she would do them good rather than harm and that she would have the advantage of knowing what was considered best for them by those who had most experience with them. To secure that training she volunteered to nurse for three months in what was then known as the New York Cancer Hospital. This has since come to be called the Memorial Hospital because the word, cancer, grates more than a little, and we are engaged in hiding from ourselves even yet the prevalence of the disease.

After this Mrs. Lathrop opened her little cancer home on the Lower East Side of New York, visiting the cancer poor in their homes and helping them as far as possible. Those who were absolutely indigent and in the worst condition she took into the apartment with her, sorry that there was room for only three of them. She devoted several hours each day to dressing other patients who were still capable of making the little journey to the home. Fortunately we have her own story of the beginnings of her work and of the first patients received and what she was able to do for them. Alone she could do but very little for so great a problem as cancer, but she certainly brought consolation into the lives of a group of the most neglected, ailing poor in the world and she actually brought joy to the last hours of many of them. As time went on, sympathetic companions joined her in the work,

until there were several score of them and by the end of Rose Hawthorne Lathrop's life several thousand incurable cancer patients had been tenderly solaced and cared for during the sad terminal stage of existence.

It required never-ending conquest of self to pursue the self-appointed task, for the work was naturally of the most deterrent kind and it must have demanded heroic courage to go on with it day after day and month after month with the only variety the death of some of her patients and the taking of their places by others. It would be very easy to think that she must have been one of those people who are not naturally sensitive to ugly conditions in life and that this fortunate insensitivity enabled her to go on with her chosen but repellent task. It might possibly be thought that she was not socially inclined and that therefore she did not miss the contact with refined people from which she was inevitably shut out by the new conditions of life that she had created for herself. As a matter of fact exactly the opposite was true of her. She was very socially inclined and she was extremely sensitive to all the deterrent things of life.

Her brother, Julian Hawthorne, in an article in *The Atlantic Monthly* [4] has told us, as only a member of the family could, just what was the attitude of mind of his sister Rose as regards the ugly things of life and her supreme sympathy for all that was lovely. This reveals to us how utterly at variance with her tastes was the occupation that had now become the round of daily life for her. She had to sacrifice her natural inclinations entirely and overcome all the deepest feelings of her being in order

[4] September, 1928.

to devote herself to these poor patients. Julian Hawthorne has said of her younger years, and surely the child is mother of the woman, [Rose] "was an innate patrician; seemed to have a private understanding with royalty; had a sympathetic enjoyment of high ceremonies and was extremely fastidious in her tastes. Ugliness, dirt, disharmony, revolted her and she averted herself from them with a hearty disgust." No wonder that her brother says of her that, in view of her after career, these traits of hers must be properly appreciated in order to understand the marvelous sacrifice that Rose Hawthorne made in order to care for the destitute cancer poor.

The more one knows of Rose Hawthorne, the deeper is the mystery of her finding not only satisfaction but actual consolation and happiness in work so deterrent to her natural inclinations. She had all the qualities that make of life a most dangerous adventure, and she came out of it a glorious example of unselfish heroism. Her brother Julian says of her, "Beautiful, gifted, impetuous, imperious and fastidious, the way to perversity was broad before her. Her friends were over prone to indulge and defer to her and generous impulse could not protect her from selfishness. She might have made a brilliant figure before the world but the heights above the world are reached by suffering. . . . Nothing less than the extreme would satisfy her thirst for self-sacrifice. Whatever was most abhorrent to the instincts of the flesh, that must she embrace; whatever was most hopeless and forlorn in human fate, that must she love and assuage. All that had given joy in her life must be banished for the sake of a purer joy. In no figurative sense but literally must she

accept the stern injunction 'sell what thou hast and give to the poor . . . and follow Me.' "

Her nature had not changed, as natures do not as a rule, and it was this same extremely fastidious woman who took up the nursing of the incurable cancer patients amid all the deterrent surroundings and special repulsive circumstances of the Lower East Side in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Goethe said that if you want to get all there is in life you must deny yourself, *Entbehren! Entbehren sollst du!* This is what Rose Hawthorne Lathrop did and continued to do for all the rest of her life until, after more than thirty years of continuous occupation with her poor cancer patients, at the age of seventy-five she breathed her last with a smile on her face and without knowing that death had come to her.

In the meantime she had organized a little community destined after her death to continue her good work of caring for her beloved cancer poor. Where she had begun by caring for but three or four in her little flat, two homes now sheltered more than a hundred. Some of those who came to the cancer home found it so different from the surroundings to which they had been subjected in their solitary misery that they were heard to mutter, "This is heaven." She knew that her work would go on, for now there were some forty devoted to it and so she died happy.

Mrs. Lathrop hoped that her work would extend to other cities besides New York and so help to solve one phase at least of the cancer problem. The realization of her hope is already in view. As this book went to press, a home for the care of the cancer poor, which is to be

known as the Sacred Heart Free Home for Incurable Cancer, was opened in Philadelphia. It is only a question of time until similar foundations will be made throughout the country. The work is sadly needed. Over a hundred thousand people die of cancer every year in this country, and it is said that over a million die from the disease in the civilized world annually. We are lengthening human life, but every year of living after forty makes us just that much more likely to die of cancer, which is now one of the major causes of death. The *United States Public Health Reports* declared several years ago that cancer seemed to be not only relatively but absolutely on the increase.

Medical science has so far failed to give any hint of the solution of the cancer problem either with regard to prevention or cure. Some of the experts who know most about the cancer situation are inclined to think that we should not talk much about cancer because it produces unfavorable suggestion in the minds of patients who must bear the suffering of it. Rose Hawthorne's thirty years of devotion to her cancer patients afford a gleam of hope in the darkness of the problem. Death from cancer would be an intolerable evil except that death is inevitable anyhow and this is but one mode of it. Let us hope that medical science will provide cure or prevention in the not distant future, though many medical scientists have little expectation of a consummation so devoutly to be wished.

Rose Hawthorne's work lives on after her to be a help in the solution of this serious problem. There are two requirements for admission to her homes: first, you must

have incurable cancer, that is, physicians must have declared that there is no hope of your recovery and only one thing is left for you to do, suffer in patience until death comes; secondly, you must have no money. If you have any means or if you have friends who can be of help to you, then Mother Alphonsa's Servants of Relief have no place for you. Over and over again patients have been refused admission because they were able to pay or their friends could afford to pay for them. These are literally homes for the destitute poor suffering from incurable cancer.

What a precious treasure for humanity it would be if Mother Alphonsa's life could be told with all the simplicity and straightforwardness with which she lived it. Fortunately there are materials from her own hand which tell us the story better than any one else could. It is these materials with only such comments and connections as will make them more readily comprehensible that have been gathered to make up this life.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	INTRODUCTION	7
CHAPTER		
I.	THE FAMILY BACKGROUND	23
II.	ROSE HAWTHORNE'S EARLY LIFE	43
III.	THE HAWTHORNE LEGACY	59
IV.	LIVING CLOSE TO THE POOR	72
V.	THE FIRST PATIENT	82
VI.	THE HUMBLE BEGINNINGS	99
VII.	A PATIENT AFTER MOTHER ALPHONSA'S OWN HEART	104
VIII.	APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA	116
IX.	THE FIRST MALE PATIENT	127
X.	THE BLESSEDNESS OF FINDING ONE'S WORK	149
XI.	MOTHER ALPHONSA'S GRATITUDE TO THE FRIENDS OF HER WORK	160
XII.	AS OTHERS SAW THEM	170
XIII.	THE SHORT AND SIMPLE ANNALS OF THE POOR MOTHER ROSE'S DIARY	180
XIV.	TRIFLES IN THE WEB OF LIFE—AND DEATH	217
XV.	HAPPINESS WITH DEATH IMPENDING	234
APPENDICES:		
	ANOTHER MODE OF CHARITY	259
	THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF	264

MOTHER ALPHONSA

ILLUSTRATIONS

Rose Hawthorne Lathrop as She Began Her Work *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

The Sacred Heart Home in Philadelphia 28

426 Cherry Street 106

St. Rose's Free Home (71 Jackson Street) 132

Mother Alphonsa as She Received the Rotary Gold Medal 184

The New Rosary Hill Home 226

MOTHER ALPHONSA

MOTHER ALPHONSA

I

THE FAMILY BACKGROUND

THE family background of Rose Hawthorne was one of the most interesting in America. Most lovers of Hawthorne are likely to think of her father as the supreme spiritual influence in her life, but her own publication of her mother's letters with passages from her journal, has made it very clear that there was another great soul in the Hawthorne family, intimate filial contact with whom must have meant a great deal for the development of her younger daughter's character. The relations between father and mother were such that they constitute one of the great love stories of history not written but actually lived. Indeed, the charm of this companionship, as revealed to us by the letters and journals of the Hawthornes, was so great that the ordinary individual is almost inclined to think that it represents an impossible ideal rather than a very simple actuality. In our day when it has become the custom somewhat to feel that married happiness after the light of the honeymoon has waned is a vanishing dream, this story of the Hawthorne family is indeed interesting, and it shows how much of happiness there can be in life as a consequence of well-mated marriage even

though lived under circumstances trying indeed to the souls and hearts of the man and woman in the case.

In his "Prelude" to the reissue of *Memories of Hawthorne* by Mother Alphonsa in 1923, Maurice Francis Egan has summed up very well the place of the father in this household and at the same time his place in English literature:

"The Hawthornes, as a family, have never lost that evanescent charm, that elusive flash of the Gleam which sets them apart from the rest of the world; and the head of the family was the first psychological novelist of our time, the most sympathetic and noble of interpreters of human character, made in the likeness of God. The greatest modern master of English style—with the exception of Newman, Walter Pater, and Stevenson—he is a figure whose attraction for us grows year by year. It is hard for the ordinary reader to pluck out the heart of his mystery, to explain his appearance in that garishly lit New England in which there seemed to be, for those who saw it from the distance, only bright sunlight or dismal shadows, unsoftened by 'purple mists.' It is a platitude to say that Hawthorne waved his wand—his magic wand—and gave to his part of New England a new atmosphere of softness and grace and mystic shades and of secrets half spoken."

Hawthorne was no mere bookworm, however, and above all no intensely preoccupied creator of rather solemn and gloomy characters, so taken up with his creations that he could not be expected to be sympathetically human in the ordinary relations of life. On the contrary, the author who knew Puritan hearts and ways so well,

was a charming scholarly gentleman in the best sense of that word, deeply interested in everything human. Almost more whole-heartedly than any other American author who ever lived Hawthorne might have repeated the Latin dramatist Terence's expression which drew rounds of hearty applause from his Roman auditors more than two thousand years ago: *Nil humani a me alienum puto,* "Nothing of what is human do I think unworthy of my interest."

Rose's mother, Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, was worthy of her father and was herself a really wonderful woman. She used to tell the children the early legends of the family, smilingly, as fairy tales. Her son Julian, speaking for her children, says: "We believing in fairy tales believed them—they were as credible as most genealogies." According to the family legends, the Peabodys both here and in England were descendants of Boadicea, famous queen of the Britons. After she had been led in triumph to Rome, and had died, her son fled to the Welsh mountains where for the next several centuries his descendants flourished and were known as Pe-Boadie. According to the oldest form of the legend, Owen Glendower was kin to them and some of the psychic peculiarities of "that damned magician" are supposed to have come to them.

The Peabodys were a prolific race, for the first immigrant of the name to this country had ten children and there were no fewer than that in each succeeding generation for more than a century. No wonder then that the Peabody kin turned up on all sides. George Peabody, millionaire banker and philanthropist, was a cousin of

Mrs. Hawthorne and so was Professor Andrew Peabody of Harvard. Sophia Peabody had two sisters, Elizabeth and Mary, both of whom taught school, and Mary married Horace Mann, the well-known American educator. Elizabeth became the honored and loved personality of her time and place but died a happy old maid at the age of about eighty. Sophia would probably have taught school also only that she was an invalid and was not strong enough for that occupation.

She succeeded in acquiring an education for herself that was very surprising considering the fact that there were no institutions of learning in which women were received. In the midst of her ill health, she devoted herself to her books until she read the Bible in Hebrew and Plato in Greek. Her son, Julian, in his article, "Such Is Paradise" in the *Century*,[1] says: "But such accomplishments were less rare among New England gentlewomen then than now." He points out besides that his mother knew great English poetry and prose from Shakespeare down.

With all this learning acquired largely by her own efforts it might be expected that she would surely be an insufferable prig or almost inevitably an intolerable pedant. What her son says of her however is, "What she studied her mind digested and it made her lightsome instead of ponderous. She was like a flower bed; you saw the roses, violets and daffodils but would not suspect the gold and precious stones below the surface; learning refined not clogged her speech and she appropriated it no more than she would a lovely view seen from a mountain top."

Under the circumstances it is not surprising that friends

[1] December, 1927.

and neighbors found her good company. They welcomed the chance to sit in her little room though it was understood that no one must stay long because of her delicate health. They were quite willing to accompany her on her walks but these were only too rare. Some of those with whom she was brought in contact at this time were among the most interesting people in America of that day. Among them, for instance, was Washington Allston whose years abroad as well as his talent as a painter made him one of the most agreeable of companions. Then there was Doughty, another painter, who gave her lessons; and George Hillard, whom Julian Hawthorne describes as "the acme of Boston culture." This is only the beginning, however, of the little group. There were Jones Very, the odd poet, and Channing, whose sermons were the talk of New England in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, and whose influence brought about the foundation of the Unitarians as we know them at the present time. Then there was George William Curtis, later to be one of the best known of literary men in America, and strange though it may seem, a power in politics among the Mugwumps—as the converted Republicans were called—at the time of the first Cleveland election. When he was the familiar of the Hawthornes, he was a romantic traveler inclined to be rather sentimentally overflowing about his experiences in foreign lands.

Some idea of the enthusiastic devotion of the New Englanders to those among their own people whom they reverenced, may be well appreciated from a little incident capped by a pair of expressions that are given by Julian

Hawthorne in the *Century* article from which we have already quoted. Young Emerson, who was almost worshiped in New England at that time, was among the visitors to the Peabody household, and he was ardently admired by the girls and especially by Sophia who in her worshipful way declared, "I think he is the Word again." To which her witty sister, Mary, responded, "No, he is the Gospel according to you." Of a brief call that Emerson once made to her, Sophia said, "He intruded no more than a sunset or a rich warble of a bird."

Last but by no means least among these visitors, came Nathaniel Hawthorne, then much more than when he used the expression of himself ten years later, "the obscurest man of letters in America." Only *Fanshawe* had been published but that at his own expense and no one had paid any attention to it. He was more "a legend than a reality" in his native Salem. Probably nothing will reveal the penetrating insight of young Sophia Peabody better than her description of her future husband after first meeting him, though there was at that time no question of anything like sentimental attachment between them. She said, "He looks like the angel of the Apocalypse, so powerful and gentle." He had said of her, "She is a flower to be worn in no man's bosom." But they drifted into betrothal.

After some years came the question of marriage, and then, as in the case of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, married life proved a source of happiness almost beyond their dreams, and in this case meant health and strength for the bride. Their courtship was conducted on the same high poetic plane as that of the Brownings in England,

THE SACRED HEART HOME IN PHILADELPHIA

and one almost wonders that the reality could have proved satisfying, so high pitched were the anticipations of their love. No wonder that their son, Julian, says: "The letters that passed between Sophia Peabody and Nathaniel Hawthorne during their long engagement express the mingled passion and awe of their mutual relation." Once Hawthorne wrote to her, "I never (you will smile) read your letters without first washing my hands." In another letter he said, "You are a poem. Of what sort then? Epic? Mercy on me, no! A sonnet? No, for that is too labored and artificial. You are a sort of sweet, simple, gay, pathetic ballad which nature is singing sometimes with tears, sometimes with smiles and sometimes with intermingled smiles and tears."

Love letters between deeply endowed souls can be as charmingly beautiful as they can be sentimentally trivial when the souls are of minor caliber. Wherever were love letters like those of Hawthorne? "Nothing like our story was ever written; but if it could be told it would be such as the angels would love to hear," is only one of many expressions that might be quoted. Their vein is not exhausted in a few ardent formulas of mutual affection. Further letters have such interesting expressions: "What happiness if at this moment I could be conscious of some purer feeling, some more delicate sentiment than could possibly have had birth in my own nature and therefore be aware that you were thinking through my mind and feeling through my heart! Perhaps you possess this power already."

One might almost expect that marriage following such an ardent courtship as this, would result, after the lapse

of some years at least, in an inevitable revulsion of feeling and there might even follow a definite reaction toward indifference. So far from anything like that occurring, the feelings between the Hawthornes were deepened and mellowed rather than modified in any less favorable way. Indeed, it may almost be said that they were refined and spiritualized to such an extent as to make theirs the ideal marriage.

Years after marriage when there were already several children in the family and a third in expectation—that was about the time that the being that was to be "the Rose of all the Hawthornes" was preparing for mundane existence—there are some letters of Hawthorne to his wife which show how completely absorbed he was in her, and his feelings were undoubtedly reciprocated. Just about the time when the fortunes of the Hawthornes were at their darkest and they were barely able to get along, and when he was arranging in his mind, doubtless with many misgivings as to its popular appeal, the material of *The Scarlet Letter,* he wrote to his wife: "I thank God above all things that thou art my wife. Nobody but we ever knew what it is to be married. If other people knew it, this dull old earth would have a perpetual glory round about it."

Fortunately there had been a very striking change for the better in her physical health immediately following marriage and Sophia Hawthorne continued to be able to bear children and yet to care for her growing family with success. Notwithstanding the fact that during the early years of their married life Hawthorne was able to earn very little and the outlook for the family future must

have been unpromising indeed, she seems never to have been discouraged no matter how dark things looked. Thus Hawthorne appears to have been lifted up by the help of his wife's calm power to stand the buffets of unfavorable fortune and to devote himself successfully to creative authorship in spite of an environment that would appear to be almost hopelessly discouraging for one who had not as yet achieved any literary work of distinction.

Hawthorne wrote in his journal in 1844, when their tenure of the Old Manse in Concord ended and their return to Salem occurred, at a moment when family necessity compelled him to take up the sordid post of surveyor of the port of Salem for no other reason than the meager salary attached to it: "My little wife is twin sister to the spring. Both are fresh and dewy, both full of hope and cheerfulness, both have bird voices, always singing out of their hearts; both are sometimes overcast with mists which only make the flowers bloom brighter; and both have power to renew and recreate the weary spirit. I have married the spring, I am husband to the month of May. When I offer her flowers I am introducing her to beings that have somewhat of her own nature in them; and she arranges them so beautifully that they are glad to have been gathered."

It is sometimes said that only one of the married couple has this intense feeling of love for the other. The formula has sometimes been put, there is the lover and the loved one, and the lover may be either husband or wife but the other permits himself or herself to be loved. If there were any truth in the old formula then Hawthorne would be the lover and his wife the loved one, but there

are passages in the diary of Sophia Hawthorne which make it very clear that Hawthorne was loved as much as he loved. Hawthorne used to go out to skate sometimes before breakfast, doing his writing usually after breakfast. His wife tells of seeing him: "One morning there had been a dark cloud in the east before sunrise but when I looked out, oh wonder, what a scene. The rising sun just above the hill had changed the firmament into a vast rose. On every side every point blushed rosily. I ran to the Study and the meadow was also rose and there was my husband careering about glorified by the light. Such is Paradise." Hawthorne's expression, "this dull old earth would have a perpetual glory round about it if marriages were as happy as ours," has its counterpart in Sophia Hawthorne's "Such is Paradise."

In the evenings this deeply intellectual couple read to each other and during the year after their marriage they took up the study of German. Perhaps the most interesting thing about this reading is that it is not to literary or creative works that they devoted themselves, but on the contrary to seriously informing books. For instance, Mrs. Hawthorne says, "I have just finished Ranke's *History of the Popes*." By this she did not mean, as might possibly be expected, Lord Macaulay's essay on that work but the actual many-volumed work itself. She says in another place, "One day my husband brought me from his study Luther on the Reformation. I read several volumes of ecclesiastical history. Ranke is splendid and whole-sided and gave me an idea for the first time of the state of Europe in the early days." There were many other serious books that were taken up, mainly of his-

torical character, for it is well known now that Hawthorne, and very probably also his sister, Elizabeth Hawthorne, was occupied in helping Samuel Griswold Goodrich in writing various volumes of the Peter Parley series and especially *Peter Parley's Universal History* (1847).

While her first baby was coming, their pretty Irish maid, of whom the journals and diary tell us, left them to get married herself and the housework would have fallen upon Mrs. Hawthorne under these trying conditions. It is characteristic of him that Hawthorne undertook the entire work of the household. This did not mean a few little duties while the main part of the work was shifted to some one else's shoulders, but all the household tasks. His wife wrote in her diary, "He actually *does* everything. He will not let me go into his (sic) kitchen and it is no poetry to cook and wash dishes. I have a king for my servitor. The only way we can make money now is to save it. His office is no sinecure but he declares he can manage until September. In the evenings after the work is over he reads me Shakespeare's plays. Can you think of a happier life with its rich intellectual feasts? That downy bloom of happiness which unfaithful poets have declared always vanished in the touch and wear of life is delicate and fresh as ever. For the world's eye I care nothing, but in the profound shelter of this home I would put on daily a velvet robe with pearls in my hair for my lord. This is a true wife's world."

Nor were such expressions reserved only for her own eye and possibly on occasion that of her husband, but she wrote letters to him expressive of even deeper feeling. During a few weeks of one summer in the years not long

after their marriage, arrangements were made by which Sophia visited her mother in Boston so as to have some much needed diversion. This absence from home provided the occasion for their first exchange of letters since their marriage. In her first letter she wrote, "After all, there is a strange bliss in being made sensible of the happiness of my customary life by this blank interval."

And not to be outdone, Hawthorne wrote in response, "Thou art the only person in the world that ever was necessary to me. I am only myself when thou art within my reach. Thou art an unspeakably beloved woman."

And yet the dear little woman who could write thus about her husband and her married life and who could arouse such deep feeling in a great-souled man, was a thoroughly practical housewife and mother, as this next incident of their married life reveals very distinctly.

The Hawthornes had moved in from the Old Manse which was to be immortalized in the title of his book, *Mosses from the Old Manse,* to Salem, because of a position in the customhouse which had been secured for Hawthorne in order that he might have something to live on. After something less than three years, however, just when they were getting along quite well, a change in the political status of the country led to his being replaced in his position by some one more favored by the political powers that were. His work at the customhouse had taken very precious hours away but it represented the absolutely necessary support of the family and the day he was "decapitated," to use his wife's jesting word for it, he came home deeply discouraged and almost ready to give up the struggle for existence.

Under these circumstances Sophia Hawthorne brought out the little hoard of money that she had been accumulating by the most careful economy out of her husband's official salary. Strange though it must have seemed, above all to him, for his salary was not large, the sum amounted to several hundred dollars. As she handed it to him she said, "And now you can sit down and write your stories." This was a very practical and heartening *De Profundis* indeed. Hawthorne opened his long unused desk and the first words of *The Scarlet Letter* were written that afternoon.

When their marriage took place Sophia was thirty-two and her husband was thirty-nine. During the years of the honeymoon in Concord at the Old Manse, their son, Julian, has said of them: "They dwelt like Adam and Eve in Eden but with more wisdom." They were poor indeed beyond almost what we can conceive of in the modern time, for there was literally scarcely enough to keep the household going. It is often said that when poverty comes in at the door love flies out the window but such was not the case with the Hawthornes. Their poverty and the hardships that inevitably went with it, instead of introducing any element of friction into their lives or making them think less of each other because of absorption in the cares of life, only drew them closer together and made them happier in the feeling that they meant so much to each other. Their misfortunes, Julian Hawthorne says, "served but to promote their mutual love and understanding. Sophia Hawthorne now experienced far more than the felicity which Sophia Peabody had ever imagined."

Of course Sophia Peabody had gone through some very severe trials in her younger years. She had had to bear sickness and suffering and had borne it not only with unflinching resolution but with a whole-hearted acceptance that enabled her to derive all possible benefit from it. Her son has expressed that in his article in the *Century* so well that it would be hopeless to say it in any other words than in those which he has chosen to express his mother's deepening of character through suffering:

"Therefore the dominion of pain so early established in her became a beneficent protection. Impulse could not be carried into act and opportunity was thus afforded to winnow the chaff from the grain. Her bodily inability promoted the wisdom of her spirit. While still on earth she was raised above it and almost became like a Catholic saint, an object of pious pilgrimage. Moreover her innocence of childhood was thus protected and her suffering, instead of concentrating her interest upon herself, turned it to others. So it repaid its cost."

The years of her married life in Salem, then, when there was a great deal to be borne, when the future was uncertain and her husband whom it had been hard enough to see in an uncongenial occupation was deprived of his office and must revert to his pen for a livelihood, were full of trials. They represented the deepest of shadows after the honeymoon. Hawthorne was writing *The Scarlet Letter* in one room on money that had been saved with oh! so much care out of a meager salary. The disturbing question was whether his writing would ever have an appeal popular enough to earn anything for them. She was caring for his loved and revered mother who was

dying in the room below, her own children were not always well and their ills and ailments were a deep source of anxiety to so sensitive a soul, another child was coming, and all of this together constituted a severe test of love and constancy, but the lovers emerged wearied but victorious.

When the returns from *The Scarlet Letter* came in, and after the death of Grandmother Hawthorne, the family moved to Lenox in order to afford opportunity for Hawthorne to go on with his work as a writer. They lived in a little bit of a house and Julian Hawthorne says, "Sophia Hawthorne made of her little shack a place that reflected in every detail her husband and herself and the marriage that united them. It was personal, serene and unobtrusive. People were charmed unawares." There was a true atmosphere of home about it. Their house represented the intimate lives of those who dwelt in it.

Hawthorne himself spent four to six hours a day writing, for willy-nilly he had to go on with his work in order to support his family. The evenings were chiefly a gathering around the astral lamp of those days to hear father read his stories from the manuscripts. He was then writing *The Wonder Book* and *Tanglewood Tales*. Julian Hawthorne says, "We children sat in reverence. The mother's smile as she sat listening and sewing on small garments expressed the sense of the meeting."

During the time that Hawthorne was consul at Liverpool, and the children were growing up, when more than a dozen of years of married life might be expected to have made marital happiness at least a little commonplace, the separation necessitated by Mrs. Hawthorne's

prolonged cough which sent her down to Lisbon and Madeira, was almost heartbreaking for Hawthorne and while in exile Mrs. Hawthorne wrote to her husband:

"I am all the time tumbling into fathomless reveries about going home.

"Dearest, I have an idea! Next winter, if you wish to remain in England, and my coughing continues, I will tell you how I might do, and be most happy and comfortable. I might remain in my chamber all winter, and keep it at an even temperature, and exercise by means of the portable gymnasium. I am sure the joy of your presence would be better than any tropic or equator without you." It is easy to understand with this sentiment before one how thoroughly the Hawthornes appreciated Coventry Patmore's epic of domestic bliss, *The Angel in the House*. In a letter to her sister, Elizabeth, Mrs. Hawthorne tells how much more of enjoyment Hawthorne found in staying at home with his family than in the dinners and social engagements of various kinds that were being pressed on him by admirers in England. A great many Americans envied him the attraction which drew to him practically all the English people who were socially prominent at this time, but his wife says, "These are heavy hours to Mr. Hawthorne and I know he is wishing he were at home at this moment." She adds:

"Last evening he was reading to me the rare and beautiful *Espousals* of Coventry Patmore. Have you seen *The Angel in the House* yet? It takes a *truly* married husband and wife to appreciate its exquisite meaning and perfection; but with your miraculous power of sympathy and apprehension, I think you will enjoy it, next to us."

In 1853 Hawthorne's college friend, Franklin Pierce, the newly elected President, appointed Hawthorne consul to Liverpool. The idea behind the appointment was that this would enable Hawthorne to make sufficient money so that he would be independent of money cares and at the same time afford him and the family the opportunity for contact with European culture in a way that would give Hawthorne himself and his family, and especially Mrs. Hawthorne who had long dreamt of such an opportunity and had planned for it, a chance to devote herself to the study of the great art of Europe.

The well-meant intentions of his college chum proved vain in one regard. "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft agley" and Congress took it into its head to alter the mode of compensation of the consul. He had been paid by fees and the previous incumbent had walked off with a fortune. With these transferred to the government account, the salary would suffice only for their European adventure by dint of careful economy. As Julian Hawthorne says, "Had the whimsical stringency of our lawmakers been foreseen, the author, now no longer obscure, might have stayed at home and made more money by writing." But the husband and wife decided to hold on; economy had always been a familiar inmate of their household and if they could manage railway fares and board and lodging, their eyesight would serve them as well as the millionaires in the galleries and churches of Europe. So they went, and the trip, as might readily be expected, was a wonderful stimulus for both of them.

Rose Hawthorne in her later years often dwelt on the

fact that the comparative poverty of the Hawthorne household, or at least that moderate family income which required them to watch over every cent that they spent, had been an excellent training for all of them in later life. The family was not parsimonious and they lived so as to get what was best in life though there was the constant necessity for caring for even small amounts of money. In her *Memories of Hawthorne* Mrs. Lathrop said:

"If a good deal of money was used by my parents, it was never distributed with freedom, but for those luxuries which would gather the least rust; and not a little was exchanged for heavenly treasure itself, in charity that answered appeals too pathetic to disregard. And we children learned—though we did not learn to save money, because our parents could not—to go without the luxuries money oftenest brings; a lesson that comes to happy fruition in maturer life, if there is need of it. I say happy, because we look back with joy to the hours spent in toughening the sinews of endurance."

When the end came and her husband was no more, it is easy to understand how utterly desolate Mrs. Hawthorne was. To appreciate the spirit which prompted Rose Hawthorne to devote herself so utterly to the cancer poor with the feeling that she was doing what God wanted her to do, it is necessary only to read how Mrs. Hawthorne, who was to outlive her husband for some twenty years, took his death. Here is the sublime faith that makes everything clear and makes even the thorny devious paths of life's trials smooth and straight. She felt that so much had been given her, and she enumerates all her blessings, that now it might be expected that what was most precious

might be taken from her and she must only bow and submit, not alone in patience, but with a feeling of joy that it should be asked of her. Surely Rose Hawthorne must have shared those feelings of her mother's when, after losing husband and child, she gave up all else to devote herself to what she felt was the task that God had assigned her. Her mother wrote after her husband's death: [1]

"I have 'enjoyed life' and its 'hard pinches' have not too deeply bitten into my heart. But this has been because I am not only hopeful and of indomitable credence by nature, but because this temperament, together with the silent ministry of pain, has helped me to the perfect, the unshadowed belief in the instant providence of God; in his eternal love, patience, sweetness; in his shining face, never averted. It is because I cannot be disappointed on account of this belief. To stand and wait after doing all that is legitimate is my instinct, my best wisdom, my inspiration; and I always hear the still, small voice at last. If man would not babble so much, we could much oftener hear God. The lesson of my life has been patience. It has only made me feel the more humble that God has been so beyond count benignant to me. I have been cushioned and pillowed with tender love from the cradle. Such a mother seldom falls to the lot of mortals. She was the angel of my life. Her looks and tones and her acts of high-bred womanhood were the light and music and model of my childhood. Then God joined my destiny with him who was to be all relations in one. Pain passed away when my husband came. Poverty was lighter than a thistledown with such a power of felicity to uphold it.

[1] *Memories of Hawthorne*, p. 478.

With 'lowering clouds' I have never been long darkened, because the sun above has been so penetrating that their tissue has directly become silvered and goldened. Our own closed eyelids are too often the only clouds between us and the ever-shining sun. I hold all as if it were not mine, but God's, and ready to resign it."

This was the background of family life in the midst of which Rose Hawthorne was brought up. Is it any wonder that she had a beautiful soul and that all her life people thought so much of her? What she had by heredity from two such parents can well be imagined. How she was influenced by her environment for the bringing out of all that was best in her, is easy to understand after reading the account of the family felicity of the Hawthornes and the loving affection among the children. After making many claims exclusively for heredity or environment, we have come in recent years to realize that both heredity and environment are of very great significance. In Rose Hawthorne's case they combined to make hers a beautifully charming character. With this in mind, is it surprising that she spent the last thirty years of her life in utter devotion to poor creatures sadly afflicted and hopeless of consolation in this life who had no one else to care for them?

II

ROSE HAWTHORNE'S EARLY LIFE

EVEN a brief account of Rose Hawthorne's early life will help those who are interested in the later stage of her career to understand better the foundress of the Servants of Relief for Incurable Cancer. She was a charming, beautiful child, who became a very gracious and attractive young girl, and developed into a handsome woman who won all hearts around her. With everything, apparently, to make her seek the satisfactions of the social life around her where so warm a welcome awaited her, she found a deep sympathy for suffering human beings in her heart that impelled her to give up self and take up the care of those who needed help and consolation. We cannot solve the deep mystery of a life of this kind, but we can trace something of the influences that were at work in bringing about its development into such a beautiful self-surrender, and these may help to some understanding of it.

Rose Hawthorne, as her brother tells us in his biographic sketch of her [1] was born in "May, 1851, in Lenox on the Berkshire Hills: a child of spring and spring never perished from her nature." As a child, "She was hearty, vigorous and impetuous, blue-eyed and rosy with the auburn hair of that temperament." No wonder that

[1] *Atlantic Monthly,* September, 1928.

literary visitors to the family spoke of her as "the Rose of all the Hawthornes."

Her father looked very confidently to this second of his daughters as though she were to mean more to him than any of his other children. Some two months after her birth he wrote of her: "Rose is a bright and healthy child and neither more nor less handsome than babies generally are. I think I feel more interested in her than I did in the other children at the same age, from the consideration that she is to be the daughter of my age—the comfort (at least so it is to be hoped) of my declining years." Julian Hawthorne who has supplied this quotation comments on how disappointed this anticipation was to be. He says of his father at Rose's birth, "He was forty-seven and was to die when Rose was in her thirteenth year."

Some hint of the intense mother love with which Rose Hawthorne's life as a child was enveloped, may be gathered from some of the expressions that occur in Mrs. Hawthorne's letters to her mother while they were in Lenox. Here for instance is a suggestive paragraph out of those letters.[3]

"Baby Rose has had a carriage for a week or more, and we took her one day down to the Lake. I wish you could have seen her in the wood, when I held her in my arms. She smiled and smiled and smiled, at the trees and the Lake and the woodland sounds, till she transported mamma almost out of the proprieties. 'To kiss her all to pieces,' 'to hug her to death,' 'to devour her,' were processes to which she rendered herself fearfully liable.

[3] *Memories of Hawthorne*, p. 169.

How wonderful is this love for which there is no mortal expression, but which we can only shadow forth by death and destruction."

The Hawthorne family all seem to have had this impulse to intense affection which is so marked in father and mother. In her letters to her mother, Mrs. Hawthorne now and again gives a picture of the affectionate relations of the children to each other and, above all, of their kind regard for Rose which is a revelation of the very beautiful family life in which they were all brought up.[3]

"Julian has begun to speak to the baby now. He exclaims, 'Oh, you darling!' and holds her on his lap with such a look of bountiful and boundless tenderness and care as would charm you to see. I should as soon expect an angel from the sky to descend to a rough scuffle with a desperado as for Julian to disturb or annoy the little Rosebud. Sometimes we go down to the wood near, and baby sleeps in the carriage to the music of pine tree murmurs and cricket-chirpings, and once in a while of birds, while Una and Julian build piles of tiny sticks for the fairies' winter fuel, and papa and mamma sit and muse in the breathless noon."

The very charming family life of the Hawthornes is illustrated by a little passage from Mrs. Hawthorne's letter written to her mother when Rose was only a little over a year old. They had been moving from Lenox to Concord and when Nathaniel Hawthorne himself came, this was the family greeting:[4]

"Una was impatient of waiting for papa and Julian,

[3] *Memories of Hawthorne*, p. 169. [4] Ibid., p. 191.

and walked off to meet them. At last I heard the rumble of the carriage, and took baby out on the piazza. When Julian passed, he was at the open window of the carriage; and baby saw him and screamed for joy; and Julian shouted to see me; and the echoes were fairly roused by the ecstasy of meeting, all around."

Before the conclusion of that same letter, Mrs. Hawthorne confesses that it was no sinecure caring for her little troop. She says: "I have no time to think what to say for there is a dear little mob around me. Baby looks fairest of fair today. She walked Miles about the house."

Rose seems to have been precocious physically as well as mentally, for it is not long after her first birthday that her mother has to tell of her, "Rosebud walked all around with us in perfect sobriety listening to our conversation." This was one day when Mrs. Emerson and her sister had come to see them to welcome them to Concord.

After Concord came the years in England while Mr. Hawthorne was the consul at Liverpool. Every now and then there is a letter from Mrs. Hawthorne, particularly to her mother, mainly filled with accounts of the children and their doings. Rose comes in for her most affectionate maternal expressions. This is not surprising from a merely natural standpoint, for a mother's heart goes out to her youngest, but there seems to have been something more than even the deepest maternal affection in her feelings for Rosebud. Mother found in her youngest child a sympathy with her own nature that made her feel doubly the satisfaction of motherhood. In a letter written to her father not long after their arrival in England, Mrs.

Hawthorne shows how much she finds of happiness in the awakening sensibilities of Rose:

"A very great joy it is to Rosebud to see the lovely little English robins come to pick up crumbs. They excite a peculiar love. They have told the linnets and thrushes of our hospitality, and the linnets actually come, though with dread and trembling, and they carry off the largest crumbs for their families and neighbors."

While at Liverpool the Hawthornes visited the Isle of Man, and Mrs. Hawthorne in a rather long letter reveals something of the very tender affection which existed between her and her youngest child, the Rosebud of whom she talks. A lengthy quotation seems justified because it serves to give an idea of Sophia Hawthorne's intimate sympathy with nature in her varying moods and thus brings out what a charming background for life close association with her must have meant for her children. Maternal and filial relations must be considered to have been quite ideal and it would be expected that the children would grow up to be supremely sympathetic toward those who were in need around them, since their own wants had been so devotedly met in their younger years. Mrs. Hawthorne wrote:

"This morning, soon after ten, we summoned a boat, and were rowed to St. Mary's Rock, which has a good beach on one side, and spent two hours there. There was a delicious air and bright sunshine, and we found innumerable pretty pearl shells among the pebbles; and Julian bathed in the sea. Rosebud enjoyed it very much, and kept close to me all the time. I asked her why she kept so near mamma, and she replied, 'Oh, dear mamma, I

cannot help it.' Once she put her little foot into a pool, and I had to take off her sock and shoe and dry them in the sun. Her snowy little foot and pink toes looked, on the rocks, like a new kind of shell, and I told her I was afraid a gentleman who was seeking shells on the other side of the island would come and take it for a conch shell, and put it in his pocket for his little children. She shouted at this; and then threw back her head, with a silent laugh, like Leatherstocking, showing all her little pearly teeth—so pretty with her rosy cheeks and streaming hair."

We have occasional glimpses of little Rose in the English society that insisted on gathering round Hawthorne while he was in England. Mrs. Hawthorne found the English delightful: "They seem life-long acquaintances. . . . There is such a simplicity, such an ease, such an entire cordiality, such sweetness, that it is really beautiful to see." The Hawthorne children fitted into this very well and Rose particularly attracted a great deal of attention. In one of her letters to America, Mrs. Hawthorne tells of one of these incidents:

"Two Londoners called lately—one a Mr. William Jerdan, about seventy years old, a literary man, who for fifty years has been familiar with the best society in London, and knows everybody for whom one cares to ask. He is a perfect mine of rich memories. He pleased me mightily, and made me think of Dr. Johnson. Rose sat on his knee, and gazed with unwinking, earnest eyes into his face. He said he never saw anything like it except the gaze of Talleyrand (whom he knew very well). He said that Talleyrand undertook to look at a man and not

allow a man to look into him—he always fixed such a glance as that upon one. Imperturbably, baby continued to gaze, without any smile; and he kept dodging from her and making funny contortions, but she was not in the least moved. 'Why,' he exclaimed, 'you would be an admirable judge, and I should not like to be the fellow who would take sentence from your Lordship when you get on your black cap!' At last she smiled confidingly at him. 'There,' he said, 'now I have it! She loves me, she loves me!' "

Mrs. Hawthorne wrote the most interesting, intimate long letters to her relatives in America and in one to her sister she has this note with regard to Rose: "Rose is in no danger of forgetting you. We talk to her about you a great deal and she is always referring to 'When I was in "Morica." ' "

What her sister, Una, thought of Rose is very well expressed for a child of her years, probably about nine, in a letter sent from England at this time. One is not quite sure which to admire the most, the precocious maturity of the letter or the sisterly affection it expresses. Una wrote:

"Rose is sitting on papa's knee, and through her golden hair I can see her little contented face. She has got down now, and is engaged in a lively discussion with Julian about her name. Julian has been dancing around with the heat, for he thought dancing around would keep him cool. Rose is sitting in mamma's lap now, and she looks so jolly. Her very rosy round face and her waving flowing hair make her look so pretty. She is very sharp, and she has a great deal of fun in her. She has learnt, 'Hark, the lark,' 'The

Cuckoo,' and 'Where the bee sucks, there suck I.' She says them very prettily, and she has a sweet, simple way of saying what she knows."

It must not be thought that Rose did not have the usual childish faults and some of these are chronicled. Here for instance is a note from one of her mother's letters: "Rose fell and hurt her knees and elbow following a monkey." Her curiosity had gotten the better of her and she paid no attention to where she was stepping for her eyes were glued on the little caricature of humanity and she had to pay for her curiosity.

The climate of England did not agree well with Mrs. Hawthorne. She contracted a cold which hung on in spite of skilled efforts to control it until finally the English physicians prescribed that she and the children must leave England for the winter, suggesting that they should go to Portugal. The separation was a severe pull on the heartstrings for Hawthorne and his wife who were wrapt up in each other, but his duties as consul at Liverpool required his presence there and Mrs. Hawthorne's health was of paramount consideration, so they had to submit. Here are two of Hawthorne's letters to his daughter, Rose, while they were in Portugal. They breathe a spirit of playful fatherly affection that might perhaps not be expected in the serious Hawthorne nature, but in family matters Hawthorne always revealed depths of love.[5]

"My dear Little Rosebud—I have put a kiss for you in this nice, clean piece of paper. I shall fold it up carefully, and I hope it will not drop out before it gets to Lisbon. If you cannot find it, you must ask Mamma to

[5] *Memories of Hawthorne*, pp. 294-5.

look for it. Perhaps you will find it on her lips. Give my best regards to your Uncle John and Aunt Sue, and to all your kind friends, not forgetting your Nurse.

"Your affectionate father,

"N. H."

Some months later when solicitude over mother's health had abated because of reports of her improvement, Hawthorne found time to write at greater length, letting his fatherly heart pour itself out in injunctions to make his little girl just as good as could be. His letter indicates that perhaps he had been hearing that Rose, taking advantage of mother's illness as the best of children will, had not been so good as she ought to have been:

"My dear Little Rosebud—It is a great while since I wrote to you; and I am afraid this letter will be a great while reaching you. I hope you are a very good little girl; and I am sure you never get into a passion, and never scream, and never scratch and strike your dear Nurse or your dear Sister Una. Oh no! my little Rosebud would never do such naughty things as those. It would grieve me very much if I were to hear of her doing such things. When you come back to England, I shall ask Mamma whether you have been a good little girl and Mamma (I hope) will say, 'Yes, our little Rosebud has been the best and sweetest little girl I ever knew in my life. She has never screamed nor uttered any but the softest and sweetest sounds. She has never struck Nurse nor Una nor dear Mamma with her little fist, nor scratched them with her sharp little nails; and if ever there was a little angel on earth, it is our dear little Rosebud!' And when Papa

hears this, he will be very glad, and will take Rosebud up in his arms and kiss her over and over again. But if he were to hear that she had been naughty, Papa would feel it his duty to eat little Rosebud up! Would not that be very terrible?

"Julian is quite well, and sends you his love. I have put a kiss for you in this letter; and if you do not find it, you may be sure that some naughty person has got it. Tell Nurse I want to see her very much. Kiss Una for me.

"Your loving,

"Papa."

Those who marvel at Rose Hawthorne's unlimited devotion to her poor cancer patients in the later years of her life need only read the account we have of her mother's devoted attention to her ailing daughter, Una, to appreciate that the roots of sympathy for suffering and the spirit of self-sacrifice for others were deep in her Hawthorne soul. Mrs. Hawthorne's account of the illness of her elder daughter from the dread Roman fever, when every one thought surely that she would die, would of itself reveal the inheritance of a supremely sympathetic nature the children must have shared. For weeks Una's life hung in the balance and all the American and English colony in Rome came to inquire about her and to bring her flowers and broths and jellies as was the custom of that time. Carriages were constantly at the door. "Even dear Mrs. (Robert Barrett) Browning who almost never goes upstairs," Mrs. Hawthorne wrote, "came the moment she heard. Mrs. Ward also usually unable to go

upstairs came every day for five days, and then there was the American minister who came almost daily and Mr. Aubrey de Vere and General Pierce who came three times a day to console Hawthorne, so that Mrs. Hawthorne says, 'I think I owe to him almost my husband's life.' "

Mrs. Hawthorne herself was all this time night and day with Una. She says: "No one shared my nursing because Una wanted my touch and voice; and she was not obliged to tell me what she wanted. For days she only opened her eyes long enough to see if I were there. For thirty days and nights I did not go to bed; or sleep, except in the morning in a chair, while Miss Sheppard watched for an hour or so." With such nursing no wonder Una recovered.

Perhaps nothing shows how simple-hearted was the man Hawthorne, who could so thoroughly penetrate the hearts of his fellow men and see their trials and sympathize with their sufferings, as the fact that he liked to play games with his children. Blindman's buff was one of these games in which not only the children but he seemed to get a great deal of fun, as we have noted in another passage. Rose tells of his sharing in her sports on the Pincian Hill. One of these was a game on the stone benches with pebbles in which the skill consisted in having the pebble stay on a chalk marked square that counted in a special way. This paragraph is illuminating indeed for the character of Hawthorne and his conscientious devotion to his children in their plastic years.*

"Going to the Pincian Hill on Sunday afternoons, when my father quite regularly made me his companion, was

* *Memories of Hawthorne*, p. 360.

the event of my week which entertained me best of all. To play a simple game of stones on one of the gray benches in the late afternoon sunshine, with him for courteous opponent, was to feel my eyes, lips, hands, all my being, glow with the fullest human happiness. When he threw down a pebble upon one of the squares which he had marked with chalk, I was enchanted. When one game was finished, I trembled lest he would not go on with another. He was never fatigued or annoyed—outwardly. He had as much control over the man we saw in him as a sentinel on duty. Therefore he proceeded with the tossing of pebbles, genially though quietly, not exhibiting the least reluctance, and uttering a few amused sounds, like mellow woodnotes."

Even after her long years of devotion to her cancer patients, under what might be presumed to be rather depressing circumstances or at least where the happy heartiness of life would be diminished, Rose Hawthorne, now become Mother Alphonsa, had a faculty for laughing that, while surely relieving herself of the depressing influences of life whatever they might be, was eminently contagious for those around her and lifted them up to the power of throwing off melancholy thoughts. In her volume, *Memories of Hawthorne,* Mrs. Lathrop wrote a description of her father's laughter which recalls probably better than anything else could her own quiet infectious laughter in the later years.[1]

"My father's enjoyment of frolicking fun was as hilarious as that accorded by some of us to wildest comic opera. He had a delicate way of throwing himself into

[1] P. 299.

the scrimmage of laughter, and I do not for an instant attempt to explain how he managed it. I can say that he lowered his eyelids when he laughed hardest, and drew in his breath half a dozen times with dulcet sounds and a murmur of mirth between. Before and after this performance he would look at you straight from under his black brows, and his eyes seemed dazzling. I think the hilarity was revealed in them, although his cheeks rounded in ecstasy. I was a little roguish child, but he was the youngest and merriest person in the room when he was amused. Yet he was never far from his companion—a sort of Virgil—his knowledge of sin and tragedy at our very hearthstones. It was with such a memory in the centre of home joys that the Pilgrim Fathers turned towards the door, ever and anon, to guard it from the creeping Indian forms."

The art of Rome had a deep and profoundly impressive effect on the Hawthornes. Rose in her *Memories of Hawthorne* declared that the study of Italian paintings during those Italian days, did more than anything else to make the Hawthornes appreciate Catholicity and remove old prejudices which Puritanic traditions had almost made part of their nature. There is a striking passage in this regard which makes it quite clear that Rose's leaning toward the old Church developed during those years when they were among the Italians. She says: [8]

"In art, Catholicity was utterly bowed down to by my relatives and their friends, because without it this great art would not have been. For, as scientists and dreamers have proved that gold cannot be made until we know as

[8] P. 369.

much as the earth, so uninspired artists have proved that religious art can only grow under conditions known solely to the heart that is Catholic. Every religious school of art which has departed from imitation of the Old Masters has forfeited holiness in depicting the Holy Family."

What the Hawthornes themselves might have missed here and there of Catholic influence from Italian art was often supplied to them by New England friends who had become enamored of the religious art of Italy. Elizabeth Hoar, that dear friend of the family of whom they thought so much, had been up in the Italian Hill Country and wrote to tell them that she had seen "dear little Rose's patron," St. Rosa, in the Staffa Gallery at Perugia and that it was very beautiful. Many expressions from that time help us to understand why in her later life Rose Hawthorne should date the beginnings of her conversion to the Catholic Church from these Italian days.

The religious influence produced on Rose Hawthorne when in her girlhood she was in Rome was very deep. This was true, however, not only for her but for all the members of Hawthorne's family. In her notes on "Italian Days" in her *Memories of Hawthorne,* Mrs. Lathrop has a very striking paragraph with regard to the Hawthornes and their change of viewpoint with regard to the Pope as the result of even a little personal contact with him. She says: [8]

"The heart of Rome was acknowledged to be St. Peter's, and its pulse the Pope. The most striking effect the Holy Father produced upon me, standing at gaze before him with my parents, was when he appeared, in Holy

[8] P. 360.

Week, high up in the balcony before the mountainous dome, looking off over the great multitude of people gathered to receive his blessing. Those eyes of his carried expression a long way, and he looked most kingly though unlike other kings. He was clothed in white not whiter than his wonderful pallor. My father implies in a remark that Pio Nono impressed him by a becoming sincerity of countenance, and this was so entirely my infantile opinion that I became eloquent about the Pope, and was rewarded by a gift from mother of a little medallion of him and a gold *scudo* (small coin) with an excellent likeness thereon, both always tenderly reverenced by me."

One of the events in Rome that was forever after memorable was the taking of Rose by Mrs. Hawthorne to the convent of Trinitá dei Monti to hear the nuns sing Vespers. This is the Roman house of the Madames of the Sacred Heart and any one who has had the privilege of hearing Vespers, and above all Benediction, sung in it is not likely to forget it. Fully fifty years afterward, Rose Hawthorne could still recall not only the pleasure but the profound devotional effect on her of that singing at the Trinitá. She remembered it ever so much better than the carnival of which she writes not long afterward. That was a mad and a merry time, memorable indeed, and yet not so impressive in recollection as the lovely voices of the nuns raised in praise and thanksgiving.

Rose herself tells how hard it was, however, for her to overcome some of the prepossessions that were inevitably in her mind as the result of Puritan associations in the family and out of it. The Italian funerals particularly attracted her attention and, as she tells, she often

saw processions come chanting through the city bearing the dead to burial with slow and solemn tread. She was rather inclined to think at that time that this sort of conduct lacked dignity and represented a certain trivial display of religious feelings. As she says, "In the churches the chanting monks and boys impressed me differently," as if she felt their sincerity. The funeral chanting, however, she did not care for. She confesses, "I did not know then that the chanting was the voicing of good, honest, Bible-derived prayers. I thought it was child's play, useless and fascinating."

More and more association with Catholics and repeated experiences with Catholic services in the churches made her feel very deeply how much of the impressive worship there was in Catholic ceremonials. As she says, "Who does not feel, without a word to reveal the fact, the wondrous virtue of Catholic religious observance in the churches? The holiness of these regions sent through me waves of peace. I stepped softly past the old men and women who knelt upon the pavements, and gazed longingly upon their simpler spiritual plane; I drew back reluctantly from the only garden where the Cross is planted in visible, reverential substance."

III

THE HAWTHORNE LEGACY

THE mystery of how Rose Hawthorne Lathrop came to take up the life work of caring for the destitute cancer patients, first in their own homes and then in a Home that she created for them, is baffling for a great many people. The more one knows of her life, the more that mystery grows. Maurice Francis Egan in an article written for the *New York Times Book Review and Magazine* [1] as a review of the annual reports of the work of the Servants of Relief for Incurable Cancer, has left us a description of the way Mrs. Lathrop impressed all those who knew her personally at that time. This description adds to the baffling character of the mystery of her taking up this difficult, deterrent task in the slums of New York. He describes her as "vivacious, with a touch of the Hawthorne wistfulness and the golden hair and the color that made one of the clever young poets of the time describe her as 'a peach blossom in the sun.'" He recalls her as one of the favorite visitors some thirty years ago "in the only salon that New York ever knew, the studio of Richard Watson Gilder, and his wife, Helena de Kay Gilder, which attracted most of the literary and artistic folk of that day." When to this is added what her brother tells of her natural fastidiousness which created a

[1] April 16, 1922.

definite tendency to avoid the ugly or deterrent things of life, the mystery grows all the deeper till it becomes an insoluble one for those who look at it merely from the ordinary human viewpoint.

Only one person held the key to that mystery and that of course was Mrs. Lathrop herself. Fortunately for us, toward the end of her life, when for the greater good of her work for the cancer poor it seemed advisable that people should be taken into her confidence with regard to her motives at its inception, she herself told in some detail the story of her very humble beginnings and the reasons which prompted her to take up the difficult task that was to occupy her so completely and indeed absorb all her energy for the last thirty years of her life. That account was published in Maurice Francis Egan's article in the *New York Times,* which we have already referred to, under the title "A Legacy from Hawthorne." In this she gives the friends of her work a glimpse into the inner working of her heart in those early days, that makes us understand better than any possible contribution from any other source could, just what were the feelings that were surging in her, feelings which came to a climax of self-sacrificing impulse that urged her into this absolutely self-forgetful occupation for the benefit of some of the most pitiable people there are in humanity. The need as it seemed to her was so great that she felt no sacrifice on her part would mean too much for its accomplishment. In order to find the solitude necessary for the gathering of her recollections, she had gone out for a walk on the hillside above Rosary Hill Home and there in the open amid the breezes, she let her mind wander back to the

early days of her work for the poor sufferers who had now become such an integral part of her life.

"In looking back after a windy walk which has somewhat bewildered eyesight and reflection," writes Mother Alphonsa, "the trees and hills are noticeable for having kept their places, and for preserving their traits steadily, so that they give the pedestrian a pleasant sense of the secondary importance of wind. In such a way, my twenty-five years of strenuous and bewildering work for a few hundred cancerous poor, and daily anxiety for these guests, gives place to a keen memory of former days when, in my half-thoughtless life, the strong facts and beautiful sublimities which I could observe here and there in the human scene taught me the best, humanly, in my life. But to be definite, I am asked to say what it was that first made me interested in this especial nursing to which I have given half of my trifling existence, to the great surprise of the majority of those who have noticed my joyful selection of cancer cases rather than of the blind and others. One of my acquaintances, putting her opinion baldly, asked me what (she read French fiction constantly herself) made me 'choose such a dirty occupation.'

"The first influence came from the attitude of my father's mind toward both moral and physical deformity and corruption. Some critics call his mental inclination morbid, using the word in the wrong place. It is the sinner who is morbid, not the man who pities him and devotes his abilities to helping others to sin no more as he did, even if the sinner himself is beyond reclaim. Extraordinary sinners, as has been said elsewhere, came to my father with their woes of conscience (much to his innate

horror) because they knew from his writings that he was full of compassionate insight; and at the cost of his equanimity he consoled them, in so far as this life holds consolation for enormous wrongs.

"Those readers who have come upon the chapter in *Our Old Home* which deals with 'English Poverty' will have seen how far his practical pity reached down, both in observing the exterior aspects of the lowest class, and the inner misery out of which they spring; and the yet more stunning truth that the lowest class is the composition of the neglect of the highest one. In his writings he shows clearly that he is 'brother' to the abject element in mankind, and perhaps in no place more sharply revealed than in the chapter referred to. The subject, as he treats it there, had in my early days of reading a hold upon me which remained; and in long spaces of loneliness the firm touch could be perceived, and was indeed chilling.

"This importance of his respect for all misery, so that if it was the misery of poverty he did not lessen his regard, gave me, as I read the account of the child covered with sores in the hospital of horribles, instruction that harmonized with the melodious verities of Christ, and by its connection with my life gave no excuse for a forgetting. I detested the reading of such evidence of truth, which justly damned denial of it, and that urging to self-abnegation which has the finality of the woolsack, made me wish to be yet more self-indulgent. But I knew in my heart that this evidence was sublime wherever it might assert itself, and at last I did try to accept it to the point of sacrifices for the poor. The words in 'English Poverty,'

which seemed to me the greatest my father ever wrote, are the following:

" 'What an intimate brotherhood is this in which we dwell, do what we may to put an artificial remoteness between the high creature and the low one! . . . Let the world be cleansed, or not a man or woman of us all can be clean. . . . And here a singular incommodity befell one member of our party. Among the children was a wretched, pale, half-torpid little thing (about six years old, perhaps, but I know not whether a girl or a boy), with a humor in its eyes and face, which the Governor said was the scurvy, and which appeared to bedim its powers of vision, so that it toddled about gropingly, as if in quest of it did not precisely know what. This child, this sickly, wretched, humor-eaten infant, the offspring of unspeakable sin and sorrow, whom it must have required several generations of guilty progenitors to render so pitiable an object as we beheld it, immediately took an unaccountable fancy to the gentleman just hinted at. It prowled about him like a pet kitten, rubbing against his legs, following everywhere at his heels, pulling at his coat tails, and at last, exerting all the speed that its poor limbs were capable of, got directly before him and held forth its arms, mutely insisting on being taken up. It said not a word, being, perhaps, underwitted and incapable of prattle. But it smiled up into his face—a sort of woeful gleam was that smile, through the sickly blotches that covered its features —and found means to express such a perfect confidence that it was going to be fondled and made much of that there was no possibility in a human heart of balking its expectation. It was as if God had promised the poor

child this favor on behalf of that individual, and he was bound to fulfill the contract or else no longer call himself a man among men. Nevertheless, it could be no easy thing for him to do, he being a person burdened with more than an Englishman's customary reserve, shy of actual contact with human beings, afflicted with a peculiar distaste for whatever was ugly, and, furthermore, accustomed to that habit of observation from an insulated standpoint which is said (but I hope erroneously) to have the tendency of putting ice into the blood.

" 'So I watched the struggle in his mind with a good deal of interest, and am seriously of the opinion that he did a heroic act and effected more than he dreamed of toward his final salvation when he took up the loathsome child and caressed it as tenderly as if he had been its father. To be sure, we all smiled at him at the time, but doubtless would have acted pretty much the same in a similar stress of circumstances. The child, at any rate, appeared to be satisfied with his behavior.'

"As *Notes of Travel* later explained, though without my father's intention, this man was Nathaniel Hawthorne, at whom all the others 'smiled,' as if they thought he was posing for admiration and was really unaccountable. But he himself felt that he had never before approached so near to God. When speaking to my mother wonderingly of this episode, after my father's death, but before *Notes of Travel* was printed, she said that my father had told her that it was to him that the child had come. She called it the most extraordinary evidence of his correspondence with the highest principles, for she had never known anyone so peculiarly sensitive to even the slightest

deformity, ugliness or disease as he; and she gave me a number of illustrations to show how she had endeavored to shield him from the inevitable disagreeables of life, or any shocks of an unexpected sort that would trouble his refinement, taking the brunt upon herself. Yet he fondled a loathsome, half-witted child who was in profound neglect, and held it in his arms for some time, knowing that its human property had been the product of evil; and he so thoroughly evinced his brotherhood that the darkened mind within the abhorrent personality fully recognized it. Half-witted that mind certainly was, but not wholly without wit, and the waif waited for him at the entrance of the hospital until he had retraced his steps—and then was gone forever from its presence.

"My father gives also a second description, of a baby in arms, which brought to a climax in the chapter the extreme of his moral theme in which cowardice had no right, and that acceptance of co-responsibility which unhesitatingly gleams in all his books, and which the persons of distinction grouped near him could not prevent him from manifesting, although he had no doubt of their quick scorn. Strange! On a battlefield these aristocrats would undoubtedly have become normal, and served the lowest as well as the highest victims of ghastly wounds.

"I tried to acquire a fondness for the very poor, and I finally came to like them very much if they were rather good. But I was not satisfied with liking them; I wanted to love all the poor whom I met. I did anything I could that happened to be possible, to prove to them that I did not merely greet them in passing, but knew their claim to be identical clay with the rest of mankind to be absolute

truth. My mother was very charitable, and I tried to emulate her in various ways, such as carrying her gifts to an old woman in our Concord neighborhood and sitting for an hour with her in her stuffy cottage. I thought that I had shown a loving interest in the old woman when I listened admiringly to her slow but unceasing chatter upon her own philosophical convictions, and I admired my marvelous self-control when partaking of a large slice (and on other occasions, although then knowing the ground) of mince pie made, in her dire poverty, of apples from her own tree, possibly molasses, and probably pepper, closing this ordeal with a downright lie as to my feelings. These visits to Abigail Cook always ended by her reading aloud a Gospel page from her greasy Bible, to which she was devoted and of which the delicious beauty was not obscured even by a tremendously long nose charged with snuff. My efforts were grotesque and somewhat insincere, but the humble people I wished to love knew that I did not any more cling to the belief that I was superior porcelain, and they liked me for that. In later years my sister, Una, crowned a life of kind deeds by becoming the good support of a little orphanage in London, both by her small means and her actual labor, which was an example of the highest calibre. Of course, many congruous inducements caught upon the magnet of my fervent desire, somehow to help others, which means the loss of one's own affairs. One goad was the book which made so many readers stop, though we all passed by again—Joshua Davidson. After closing the covers of this noble appeal, I was ready to give myself to those who needed friends, and to cut off my personal likes and

gains. And whenever a serious friend came into my world of musings the crowd of aspiring thoughts started to agility, and this companion would have leave to tear up by the roots customary satisfactions and legitimate indulgences. This reflective discontent is universal, since everybody who thinks has a longing to cease the jellyfish period, and I am speaking sparingly of what so many minds discourse about at length. Fraternal charity abounds in literature. However, as best I can, I am answering the question that has so often been put to me: 'Why in the world did you set out to nurse this unattractive disease?'

"When it came to giving part of a life not greatly valued in itself to the care of cancerous poor, many reasons, little and large, had removed any heaped-up impediment that would have been in the way. To tell the truth, I was shocked to discover how unusual my new endeavor seemed to people—they seemed to be acknowledging that they were asleep in the midst of a great disaster, that of the misery of a class which they could so justly serve. Among my valuable friends at one time was Miss Emma Lazarus, the poetess, whose mind was lofty, brilliant and pathetically unsatisfied. I met her in the perfect artistic atmosphere—never to be equaled—of the studio-home of Richard Watson Gilder and his wife, Helena de Kay. Here the genius of the young Jewess was recognized to the brim, held up and rejoiced over in its rare vintage and purity. Miss Lazarus and I sometimes walked and talked together, and in her sweet delicacy of spirit she would not show in the least that she did not find a very secure footing for her mental explorations while accompanying a person who knew little Latin and less Greek, whereas she her-

self commanded both and had read voluminously. On the contrary, she assured me that I was a paragon for 'stirring her up with suggestions.' I doubt if two more such fundamentally disconsolate minds, trying to carry a corner of the woes of the world upon their quivering shoulders, could have been found together in a search of years. But early discontent can sometimes produce a result. This young woman of finest promise and exalted perceptions died in her prime of cancer; but, though I grieved deeply for her, I would not pity her, for she never knew unaided suffering, but every amelioration. On the other hand, I finally heard of a case of abandonment to death which no one of any sensibility could ignore. The victim, a young seamstress of refinement, had recently died without relatives or friends. She had been obliged by cancer to give up work, and was operated upon at a hospital where she had been told to expect a cure. When found to be incurable (some six months later), she was given one day's notice before being sent to Blackwell's Island—that den of mixed souls—and her despair was, most reasonably, complete. There was no one to stand forth and forbid the immolation of this young woman upon the altar of fraternal indifference. A fire was then lighted in my heart, where it still burns, to do something toward preventing such inhuman regulations for those who are too forlorn to protest. I set my whole being to endeavor to bring consolation to the cancerous poor.

"When I had settled down, over a year later, as a nurse in the lower east side slums, Miss Josephine Lazarus, the sister of Emma, wrote me that what I was trying to

do 'could not be done.' She had tried herself to establish a little hospital for this class, in memory of Emma, and had failed in spite of wealth, paid trained nurses and every advantage. *The nurses would not stay put.* Out of the kindness of her generous heart she sent me a donation for my mendicant and, as she thought, doomed labors, and my cancer cases, for whom I did not depend upon paid assistance, but upon service that cannot be bought.

"To voices of discouragement, derision and indignation I had a strong answer—that I knew I was incapable of doing much, but that I was going to carry out my idea precisely as I had at first received it, warm from the fire of compassion, in so far as I could. As no one felt able to say just how far I could go, the discussion was stalled. Aid of this sort was a just need of the poor, and therefore it should be met by someone. Impudent as it may seem, I declared that I was going to keep on in the somewhat unique work until that unidentified personality turned up. I have been surprised to find that persons of eminence and the highest intelligence praised our idea, which developed well as it has done, having been useful to thousands of cancerous poor, until death. And these words of our friends have sanctioned the cry I uttered to New York over the deep seas. New York answered with a ringing cordiality."

And so her life work came to her, and for thirty years she devoted herself to her destitute cancer patients, making life happier for those who thought themselves beyond the pale of happiness here below, giving her friends a chance to help in the good work and making many new friends who learned of her beneficent charity and wanted

to share in it, for here indeed was the charity that passeth all understanding fulfilled.

It is easy to understand how deeply interested her brother Julian was in this phase of his sister's life which prompted her to do the very Hawthornesque thing of taking care of the destitute sufferers from incurable cancer. He knew her fastidious character and how repugnant to her were dirt and disease and all the deterrent elements inevitably associated with the care of cancer patients from among the very poor, and he saw better than any one else how she had overcome her nature in order to follow the promptings of her heart. He realized, too, that it was something more than natural that enabled her to do it. As he says, "She knew the stories of the saints and martyrs of the Church and having once made up her mind that she would sacrifice herself for the benefit of others, nothing less than the extreme would satisfy her thirst for self-knowledge."

There is a very old expression among the religious orders which comes to us very probably from St. Benedict in the fifth century and which is said to sum up the religious life more completely than any other and yet at the same time more briefly and succinctly. It consists of just the three Latin words, *laborare et orare,* to work and to pray. That is the essence of life in a religious order. Probably Julian Hawthorne had the expression in mind, he realizes so clearly how completely it summed up the life that Mother Alphonsa led in the midst of her Servants of Relief for Incurable Cancer.

Julian says,[2] "She did not beguile herself with ecstatic

[2] *Atlantic Monthly,* September, 1928.

emotions; she realized what she did; she had abundant common sense, but she was resolved that her regeneration should be unfaltering and permanent. Nor would she seek the solace of mortal sympathy, but would pass through her fires like the martyrs of the Church before her with humility and suffering." Her brother recognized that cheerfulness was the chief index of the happiness which had come to her as the result of giving up everything else and casting her cares on the Lord and devoting herself to a life of helpfulness for others who needed her help so much. The pleasant trifles that might come to people interested in worldly matters, were as nothing compared with the deep satisfaction of this life led for others. The ordinary satisfactions of life seemed utterly trivial in her new state of mind. Julian said, "How be other than cheerful, since the indulgences of earth become a stench in the nostrils, but the fragrance of heaven is immortal?" And yet he realizes that there was no slightest conceit of her own goodness but only a recognition of the fact that having a good object she was trying her best to accomplish it: "She held no pose of sanctity, but was a plain working woman, diligent and faithful in the duties she had undertaken, work in increasing measure was always to do and she did it to the very end."

There was no doubt about the happiness that she found nor the happiness that she imparted to others because of the satisfaction that had come into her life. Even cancer patients who lived near her came to feel because of the inspiration and cheerfulness of her presence, that there was something eminently worth while in life though death was already in sight and not far off.

IV

LIVING CLOSE TO THE POOR

Mrs. Lathrop found, at the beginning of her work for the destitute sufferers of cancer, that if she wanted to accomplish results with the very simple means at her command, she must live close to the homes of those for whom she would care. That required that she should take up her residence down on the Lower East Side in the heart of the slums of those days. I need scarcely say that a great change has come over this part of New York during the twentieth century. Dr. Stephen Smith in his book, *The City That Was,* has told some of the hideous details of what life used to be in New York slums scarcely more than a generation ago. We have improved them very much in sixty years but the result is by no means ideal. Our tenement house laws have brought great mitigation of the worst elements in housing the poor and the proper enforcement of those laws has made living conditions ever so much better. But when in the last decade of the nineteenth century Mrs. Lathrop took up her residence on the Lower East Side there was much to be desired in living conditions in this part of town. Even at the present time it is not the pleasantest place in the world for a person to live who has been accustomed to a better living environment in the city and above all most of whose existence

has been spent under the pleasant circumstances of family life out in the country.

Mother Alphonsa, some ten years after her work was begun, in the February, 1904, number of *Christ's Poor,*[1] told the story of her early experiences of intimate association with the people of the district among whom she felt that she must live if she would accomplish her purpose of taking care of destitute cancer patients. Her own story as she has told it, fresh as she was at that time from her literary work, tells the tale of those days better than any one else could do it. She called her article "Some Amenities of Poverty" and it is very clear that she was trying to see all the better side of things in the sordid life around her though she could not help but dwell on many of the phases of it which make it almost insupportable for those unaccustomed to the conditions. Her point of view can only be described as Hawthornesque. She feels all the poignancies of life as it is lived by the poor and realizes how physical and moral evil serve to make life miserable indeed and yet how there are compensations that make life worth living even under the dreadful conditions among the poor of a large city. Her reaction to the life around her is a revelation of the depth of her human sympathy for those who have so few of the consolations of life and have to bear so many of its trials, and yet only a little personal knowledge of them is required to enable us to understand that they have the same feelings in every way as the rest of us.

[1] This was a little magazine published by Mother Alphonsa for several years after the foundation of her Servants of Relief for Incurable Cancer in order to call attention to the needs of the community and give her friends some details of the work.

Only habitude has brought them to bear their hardships with the equanimity that is so often remarkable in them. Mrs. Lathrop's intimate experience with the lives of the poor around her was refining her character for her life work of sympathetic care for her destitute cancer patients:

"At first poverty is so terrible to contemplate, that there is danger of one's breaking one's heart, and thinking the situation so hopelessly sad, that to remain near the people under its merciless reign would be to lose all sense of order. For this reason, I will give some testimony as to the bright lights which a kind Creator sends even through the shadows of destitution.

"I was storm-tossed with dismay in the first months of initiation, when beginning my work for the few sick poor on the East Side of New York, whom I could manage to attend to; but after a time sailed into a gentle sea, where I calmly gazed towards the peace of God's mercy, the glowing but unchanging horizon of presiding heaven, of which the circle is always about us, so lovingly. Perhaps the people I watched daily with great solicitude did not specifically enjoy the scene on all sides of the zenith, and on the river at our feet; but I hoped its cheerfulness influenced them without their full recognition of its advantages. Along the water's edge the pictures were quite Dutch, and were multiplied by constant shifting of craft, the shipping mounting and dipping over the trees of Corlears Park; and in a stiff breeze, the full-grown waves flourished up at the prows; and many-masted schooners coolly took up place and power, whenever such unspeakably impressive phantoms chose to pass in sun and shade to their solemn moorings. The stationed masts at the

wharves suggested the stacked arms of an amiable host, and the delicate eloquence of minutely involved rigging kept one perusing it, though upon a hurried errand. The glorious Brooklyn Bridge (seen broadly at the frequent squares by the river, as I hastened on my way to visits which fortunately took me to fresher air and these reviving glimpses of beauty) had many different effects at different hours, and culminated in majestic charm at sunset. At that hour, too, the long cross-streets of New York were ended to the West by scintillating orange-gold, or fair roseate clouds. The sunrise, beyond Corlears Park, was a pageant to rise for, and after a night of sad sounds, would soothe the soul as instantly as dawn upon the Alps. The moonlight and cloud-rack were always a harmonious, beneficent message from God at the end of the day, with which poverty and sin and disease could never interfere.

"But if the working class, and the not-working class, could not wholly realize the beauty which cheered them, there are other matters which do please them, without any doubt on their part. Most probably I did not discover half of the things which the poor enjoy innocently enough; the simple, homely, reasonable comforts, and cat-like satisfactions and resigned cogitations, which are the fragments of primitive life still kept by the poor, out of the ancient home of earlier times. In the first place, everybody disported in the air, there by the river, at every moment of the stormless days, unless at work or ill, from the grandparents to the babies. The latter, at four months old, smiled knowingly from the perilous arms of little girls, who eagerly begged for a neighbor's baby as rich children do for dolls, that they might dandle them

out-of-doors, with their heads rapidly gravitating to earth in top-heavy delight—a cheap and easily procured toy. One early summer evening I learned all about it, for I was taking an annular walk in Corlears Park, and was followed all around by three babies-in-arms, who, with experienced glance, swept their eyes about them in search of the sudden squall which they knew so well how to meet without fatal results. The baby of the slums is there, as everywhere, the focus of fun, charm, surprise, pathetic sweetness, and all the other antidotes of 'the blues,' though upon its innocent head may often sink the skeleton hand of neglect and horror, danger and death. The children all took me very jocosely and affectionately, knowing me well, and evidently having heard favorable reports of me; for if children are kind to you in their poor streets, they really love you. The fresh air is, then, the land of the poor; and people slept in it at night, upon the fire-escapes; the children scampered about in it lightly clad; crowds of boys and youths and girls and mothers sat in it, hour after hour; and the river sent great puffs of wind over us all the time. In winter the only real suffering is indoors, except in abnormal weather; for I defy anyone to be more cuirassed against cold than a pin-cushioned child, battened up with ragged layers of habiliments; and the older people have a variety of clothing that is beyond enumeration. I must repeat, however, that the misery indoors is often of a dank, twilighted, hungry, rentless, landlord-visited despair, which is far from homelike.

"Next to the air, the poor enjoy noise. Or, as may be said of fashionable persons who detest 'teas' and yet have them, why do they have so much noise? From four

o'clock in the morning until twelve or later at night (there was somewhat of a lull, then, for naps) there was a furious uproar; and when the lull came, the parrots sailed out upon it with their whistling, and more than stale witticisms. Cats did not usually serenade our patients a second time, there being ammunition on hand which made a noise loud and terrible upon the tin shed-roofs, even if it missed the feline back bone. But parrots and human beings surpassed the caterwauling which is the bane of persons of means; and Polish folk-songs and calls for 'cracker,' etc., could not be influenced in any way. The human beings around us were never tired of talking, if enraged, and were never weary of laughter and song if happening to be good comrades; the screams of delirium tremens, fierce vituperations, cries of murder and wailings of famished children, being exceptional disturbances in the long series of hours to each day. Here, in the old, poor streets, the horses clattered out of their many stables at daybreak, and heavily hammered into them again at night. We had a stable on each side of us and one in front, and only needed a Wouvermann to prove that we shared, very cheerily, the laborious lives of these beasts, as well as the more leisurely companionship of the poorest poor. If during the turmoiled day a hush crept into the street for a breath's space, the frolic of a piano-organ came more and more distinctly upon the stillness, and very soon was battering the side of the house with its notes, by no means unlike an engine of attack. This was supposed to be delightful, and everybody who had an ounce of mischief in his make-up began to caper, both in our abode, and the thoroughfare outside. Welcomed

with enthusiasm by squads of dancing children, the organ would become the stolid axle of a wheel of graceful girls in pairs, and advancing and retreating trios of infantine toddlers, who performed with stately melancholy, until plunged into the downright grief of tumbling in a heap, from which they emerged with glee.

"If I mention forbidden beer and gambling, it must be to record that they give great pleasure to many people who do not seem particularly wicked. The poor are not on account of their perennial misfortunes, the saints of the world, although I can understand how seemly it would be in them to take upon their shoulders the dual burden of ill-luck and self-conquest. Beer is a sad resource of poverty and broken hope; whiskey is the resource of mad revolt, and corresponds to the satisfactions of suicide, or murder, which are the devil's gifts. If the beer were not abominably impure, it might do little harm; and one can imagine that the German beer garden, ornamented with odd cakes, sandwiches and music, would do great good to our poor here in America, if the false concoctors of unreal beer could be electrocuted beforehand. The sidewalk gambling by the elder boys cannot be defended in any form; and though the singular blindness of the largest and healthiest policemen add to the juvenile fun, because it also partakes of surreptitious gain, and nevertheless casts an occasional surprise upon the flags in a rapid onslaught (which causes the boys a frenzied journey into alleys and up dark stairways, amid thunderings of suppressed laughter) one knows only too well that the gambling and cigarette-smoking boy is a sink-pot of mean wickedness, perhaps to end in State's Prison, and not to be

called an amused being at any stage of his fevered and diabolical career.

"It may seem impossible that the family life of the poor should be a source of happiness. If the father is a good man, he labors mightily for rather small returns, and scarcely finds an hour at home, unless while drowned in exhausted sleep between late evening and dawn; and too often he contracts pneumonia or rheumatism from exposure in winter storms, or is killed in his dangerous work. If the father is a scoundrel, the home life would seem to be wrecked in sorrow. All the other adverse circumstances of the poor homes may be left to the imagination. But 'God is in His heaven,' and by not forgetting or detesting the poor, He succeeds in giving them many reliefs; unless they are criminal in a fashion that even holds in the slums, where theories are positively useless, and judgments truthfully exact. The intemperate man and woman may be looked upon as very good, in spite of thievery and foul language, drunken fights and laziness. But there are some wretches who seem to do nothing particular, yet whom all feel to be hopelessly depraved. So, the good rogues have a cheerful life at home, when not in their cups, and their family and all its members are liable to great content and affection; nor could there be a greater blunder than to arrest the chief fighters in it. Rough words hurtle about; death may be dealt; but God is in His heaven, and these less abominable poor seldom bring tragedy into their little circles. One learns to rejoice in their joy, and to believe that the joys of the better social world are not more real, or less precarious. And if they are devout (for religious belief and

devotion never yet have rendered any class free from seventy times seven misdemeanors), then their consolations, and their relations with wholly sane and kindly people, are quite abundant. In living closely among the poor, I was astonished to see how the denizens of a drunken and dangerously excitable home could come into the sunshine of school and church, after lurid nights; and I simply made up my mind that the semi-depraved poor were an 'open book,' while the semi-depraved rich are a decorously closed one. The choice is between them. But meantime the poor have their hours of sanity, as well as the gamblers and rollickers and whited-sepulchres of uptown precincts. The friend of the peaceable poor is glad in this for them, to some extent; for it is not necessary to condemn them alone, or to refuse to admit that they have some truly happy moments, as we do, however little they deserve them.

"To sum up what I have set out to say:—the hideous demons of poverty are like bats, and leave our poor brothers and sisters in comparative ease of mind, when there is any sunlight at all, and when the angels of poverty seem to return from their regrettable absences.

"Many things that please the more fortunate classes, please the uncherished poor. Many little pastimes, bonbons and royal leisure hours, such as fall to the lot of belles and barbaric chiefs, relax the tension of misery. No people are so quick to seize upon a pleasure, an amenity, as the sorrow-disciplined poor. When I set beside their agonies those of the rich, their sins and those of the fortune-crowned host of well-to-do souls, and study the two orders of suffering and misdemeanor, I see more and

more that I must reverse all my ideas; and that missions to the rich, settlements for the learned, free lectures for the debonnair fledglings of wealth, will be the next resources for social betterment, and the most effective today."

V

THE FIRST PATIENT

We are fortunate to have in Mother Alphonsa's own words the account of the first patient received by her charity. The story is told in a detail that makes it all the more interesting for those who would like to know just how her work fared at the beginning. It shows how supremely human was the spirit in which the work was done. It reveals at the same time that Rose Hawthorne Lathrop's literary instincts had not abandoned her when she took up the task of helping the destitute cancer patients. The spirit of self-sacrifice which dictated her devotion of herself to the cancer poor was something super-added to her former self in its entirety and not a substitution of a newer self, even though she seemed so different from before that many of her friends wondered just how she was able to do it.

The first patient had been introduced to her among the very earliest of the cancer cases whom she nursed in the New York Cancer Hospital. It was to this hospital, now called the Memorial Hospital, that Mrs. Lathrop had recourse in order that she might be trained for her life work—as she now purposed to make it—of caring for these poor incurables. The human elements in this

story have an appeal all the greater now, thirty years later, when cancer instead of proving the definitely soluble problem it was hoped it would be at that time, has grown into the most serious scourge of humanity.

In the second, third and fourth numbers of *Christ's Poor*[1] Mrs. Lathrop describes her experience with her first patient:

"In the hospital where I gained some practical training by three months of labor in its Incurable Cancer Ward, there was a person of peculiar aspect. She had been the first object to greet my eyes when the head nurse said: 'This is the ward where you will be at work.' Across the patient's countenance stretched two neat white bars of adhesive plaster; but, as if through a prison, the eyes beamed with a gay, blue light, and all the surface of the cheeks which could be seen was glistening with color and rotundity. She held her head bravely upon a rounded neck, and her crinkled hair was nut-brown, and arranged with a twist, in the style of a hundred years ago, above her pretty white ears. The woman was short and stout. Tiny arched feet in prim little slippers peeped from under her short dress. She stepped towards us as if she owned the ward floor and sanctioned visitors. So much assurance and content with a face half relinquished to the disease every one abhorred, was a piece of courage never to be forgotten. It turned out that she was famous for her fun, wit, ingenious methods of amusing the ward by her pranks, and for her delight in the distinction which her extraordinary type of cancer had brought her. Although she had recently come from one of the worst pre-

[1] 1901.

cincts of the city, she had evidently descended from an Irish family of exceptional cleverness, retaining in its branches, no matter how far from the stem, some member who renewed its genius, its vitality of brain and sinew, and the sparkle of an imagination worthy of the best cultivation we meet and relish. She was one of those people who accumulate odd patterns of material similar to the wrappers of our grandmothers, and usually found only in attics, because she had an inborn taste for such styles of color and squirl—and those who seek, find. She rolled up her sleeves to the elbow, either because she knew her arms were as pretty as a plump girl's, or because her forbears were accustomed to dairies. Her wrists were piquant and her fingers childlike. Her lips were cherry red, and her chin would have needed no alteration by an artist in dolls. In short, she had been a very pretty piece of human nature, with that dainty touch of intelligent nonchalance which makes charm indestructible. In a cancer-patient all this was indeed unexpected. She did more than any of the other invalids both in the matter of usefulness and mischief. If any event of the least importance occurred in the ward which was our world, her comment rang tersely and invigoratingly around the circular room, by no means unlike a circus-tent, having a great shaft-like pole in the middle of it. Yet, in spite of this alertness of attention and quickness of humor, no one else but a queen could sit with such immovable dignity while awaiting the passage of time, when she was polished and trimmed for the day. Still, on the other hand, no clown could scamper around the tent with greater velocity than she around the ward, when incautiously supplied

with comical undergarments, whose capabilities for moving laughter she had recognized at a glance. Dying women laughed at her, from the ring of beds.

"Her face was so terrible when wholly exposed, that I trembled as with ague when first put to do the 'dressing' of it. This process was quite elaborate, so that I had my initiation with thoroughness, and never flinched afterwards.

"One morning I entered the ward to find its chief ornament dressed to go out. Few of the patients could by any means do so, and I had not supposed that this gruesome face-case would be allowed to emerge upon the street. The best clothes of the dead, once occupants of the surrounding beds, had been ransacked and reconsidered by this ever vigilant self-adorer. Although it was summer, Mrs. Watson, to give my patient her name, looked as round as a barrel with finery, some of it wintry, and chosen because embroidered. Over everything else, as a last touch of perfection, she was placing with her pretty white hands, a huge black lace veil (in reality a shoulder-scarf) thus hideously enlarging a huge bonnet, secured on the score of intrinsic value, not of appropriateness or fit. One corner of the heavily arabesqued veil covered her face, and she stood finished in so convulsing a state of spectral suggestiveness—gleams of white plaster glimmering here and there—that a child might have been haunted by her for life. Mrs. Watson was now very serious and stately. She was about to make her monthly visit to the Catholic Protectory, where a little grandson had been placed, and where the children were supposed to be of iron nerves, because the offspring of hardship. A basket

of fair proportions stood on the chair by her bed, into which she had for some time, she told me, deposited any dainties she could lay her hands upon, through the liberality of visitors to the other patients, or the kindness of the occupants of the private rooms along the adjacent corridor. I offered her a silver piece for the adding of candy to the mass of cake, oranges and pie, but she aroused her warm heart and threw off her hauteur, to refuse to let me rob myself of my money. Slowly, like a departing four-masted schooner, she sailed with dignified sadness, the basket on her arm, across our wide, ward threshold, and disappeared around the corner of the spacious hall. She went away on the instant of the clock-signal which was the permitted hour of departure, and she would return with similar punctuality. A frightful doom had not shaken in the least her inborn nicety as to detail. But she would return in a different mood.

"Weary, dusty and awry, the dear old thing dragged herself home to a homeless company of beds and dying companions, her storied basket empty except for the top of a boiled pig's ear. She had 'stopped in' to see her sister, a poor, widowed housekeeper in a poor tenement, and had supper upon 'pig's head,' of which she wished to bestow a portion on the sickest woman in the ward. It agreed with the latter perfectly, of course;—mind and body were refreshed by the tid-bit.

"One day this face-case disappeared. I was then on night duty, and did not know all that happened during the waking hours of the building. The empty bed which confronted me as I stepped into the ward for the night-watch, made me wonder if she had suddenly bled to death,

as was expected. She had of late been 'dressed' three times a day, and the doctors had watched her more closely than ever. She had been in the ward for six months, was pronounced no longer operable, and had submitted to the fixed rule of hospitals in regard to such a situation. She had suddenly been sent away. What had become of her? Her sister was almost destitute, with two little grandchildren to supply with a home. I was very anxious about Mrs. Watson. She had been receiving so much care that I did not reconcile myself to her receiving none at all. But I received no answer to the letters I wrote, using an address given me. In six weeks from the date of this abrupt departure, I had established myself in the little rooms in the slums, and the daily press printed notices of my plans for establishing a charity for cancerous poor. A letter from Mrs. Watson was the first appeal for help that asked for entire support—in brief, a home. It was a sublime, early autumn morning, soft of atmosphere, but roaring with a high, sunny wind, and richly blue and white with coursing clouds, when the letter came. My heart leaped with joy to think that my life of usefulness had begun in earnest, as I stepped forth from the tumble-down tenement to bring my first patient to my hearthstone. It is fortunate that I knew so little as to what I was attempting, or how unreal joy is when we come to the heart of human concerns. But life was still wonderfully simple to me, and I expected to make my old friend happy until her death, and then—foolish arrogance—I did not mean to let her die. One flame of impulse enveloped my heart as I hastened on by permission of the wind—and it was to bring her home. Such a home! The

rooms had been hired for myself alone, while I studied the poor, as nearly like them in circumstances as I could make myself. Yet there was need of a hospital at once. My fancy began to picture the simple shed, blessed with warmth and good food, which I then imagined, and still believe, would satisfy the poor I nurse.

"I have described Mrs. Watson as rotund and rosy. I found her thin and pale. I would not have known her, if it had not been for the inimitable pluck of her clever personality, which gleamed forth, although she was humbled now as a starved pug. She did not need to tell me anything, for I read all she had to tell, in a flash from the all-seeing light of sympathy. Her face was at this time 'dressed' but twice a week, and she was obliged to walk to and from the dispensary, which was some distance away, and without stockings. The well-known slippers were pathetically displayed as her only foot-covering. She had a bad cough from this cause; and whenever she coughed, her wrecked face was penetrated with a terrible pain, and she held her head in her hands to keep its walls in place. I possessed a dollar and a half at the time, and spent half of it for enough cough medicine of an infallible power, hastening to a druggist's without delay. As I have a keen sense of the danger of mentioning patent medicines with tolerance, I will put forward an excuse—that of gratitude itself; for Mrs. Watson and I believed them to be, when good, very good.

"I told Mrs. Watson that I was not positively certain of having fire enough on the hearth for cold days, or enough bread and milk for food, but that she was welcome to a place in my shabby home, if she would come. We

had always been good friends, and she said that she would gladly starve and freeze with me.

"The little side-street, the tiny tenement (in which tall people looked like eagles in a canary cage), saw the approach of Mrs. Watson in all the breadth of her out-door garb, which could still make her seem robust, though she was pitifully reduced in girth. As the arabesqued black veil was revealed at my summons, when I heard her expected knock, the absurd figure she presented gave me no desire for ridicule. I felt only the pathos of her advent to die with me, joined to a respectful joy that, since she must need some one so much, I was that one. As regarded the absurdity of externals both in her case and my own, I had learned that absurdity and misery are inseparable, and that grotesqueness particularly delights to torment and mock the desperate plights of mankind. It is no reason for neglecting them.

"The main room of my poverty-cote was small and bright as a marigold. The paint of the floor was yellow, the trimmings of the walls were white, and a big, old-fashioned fire-place had within it a flurry of burning wood. I feared it would seem to my patient a narrow and a queer place to die in; but she called it 'heaven'! I looked upon her as a sort of mother, partly because she called me 'daughter'; and I soon took up a practice of appealing to her for advice, because she developed a capacity for the wise direction of my affairs, not unlike the quiet, simple effectiveness of genius. She rose to the emergency. She was gentle, intuitive, generously kind, and at need, instantly active. The oddity of the whole thing did not disturb her at all. She did not sit down in her comfortable

chair by the window in order to remain selfishly immovable, watching the petty drama that was kept up by constant callers of all sorts, and of a very dramatic sort as a whole, although she so enjoyed events. She almost sprang up to help me, nor could I prevent her from finding out my needs, in my fatigues and early lack of assistance. Her bright blue eyes were never idle, and we all decided, when I was no longer single-handed, that this masterly observer could see around corners without stirring. The knocks at the door were slowly and surely answered by her, rising with dignity, not a breath indicating that she thought it intensely amusing to discover by a turn of the latch whether monied charity or blank despair waited on the outside of our humble office and parlor. During my long absences to visit the sick, twice a day and also in the evening, she presided over the miniature premises, and had intelligent messages to retail on my return. I detected but one species of lie during this time. As I went out, the morning after her arrival, I said: 'I know the floor looks badly; but don't you dare to scrub it, mother dear. I will do that when I come home.' 'I?' She put on the air of a dowager countess, sitting still and stately. 'Not a bit will I. You need not fear.' But she was on the floor, scrubbing, when I hastened home, 'fearing' it, indeed, because of the imminent danger of fatal hemorrhage. We cooked our tea and coffee as gypsies do, over open flame, bricks on either side; and I was glad that a loan from one of my relatives supplied the old lady with these luxuries. She was perfectly happy, and I was almost more than that. Anxiety could not dim the radiance of a sense of usefulness so keen, a sense of

freedom from heaped-up unnecessaries so mid-sea pure. She received the guests whom I wanted to have welcomed, and silently faced and frightened away those I did not want. She could tell a story enviably, and liked to do it, folding and refolding the corners of her apron as she did so, as though the sparkling thread of her discourse was to be as brief as a fillip of the fingers. If the afternoon and evening work, outside our nest, did not overlap in a manner to prevent my sitting down with her to supper, a brilliant fairy-tale right out of Ireland, wearing all the traits of humdrum verity, as it were a witch's cloak of flesh and blood to the diamond sweetness beneath, flashed into the shadow lying close to our little lamp. She had preambles, pauses, beginning, middle and astonishing surprise, laid out to catch the fancy, on four sides. There was no escape—one was fascinated. She would stop to give a sharp groan, but never failed to bravely pass by the pain.

"Our tenement rooms growing very much crowded, I placed her in a cot in my own cupboard-like quarters, that had seemed so small for even one bed. The only window abutted upon a stable wall, at a distance of a foot, and the only light was an occasional ray of the miraculous sunbeams on the wall itself, as unaccountable there as was the gush of air that never failed to sweep in. Every day proved to me what impossibilities could be done and expected, where I had supposed nothing could; and that God made a gift over and above constantly as reward of temerity—a sun-ray or a smile. I rejoiced to prove that such close proximity to a cancer-case, supposed to be particularly dangerous, was absolutely safe. So far as my

life was concerned, she saved it. Exposure to storms and fatigue, in a way called fool-hardy, and supposed by me to be indispensable, had brought on pneumonia, attacking me definitely at midnight. The agony was great, and I do not think I could have lived through the third chill. Mrs. Watson was alert to call for help, a friend of mine, a trained nurse, being on the next floor, to whom she hastened, and who knew what to do for me. In the hard experience that followed, she came every day to kneel in her own suffering at my bedside for twenty minutes, in order to say the rosary for me. With my hand clasped uninterruptedly around the relic of a saint, and with her softly whispered daily offering of prayer and pain, I felt that all was well. How pleasing her motionless figure was in the sight of the Lord of Crucifixions, I realize more and more. There was something holy about her peaceful hopefulness, and yet quiet resignation to the worst. She had true faith in the supremacy of the will of God; the strongest and the best will. It seemed strange to me, considering all this, that many persons who came, marvelled that I could endure the sight of such a terrible disfigurement, and call its possessor by loving titles, whatever was the heart she had. I was complacently satisfied; I neither doubted her worthiness of love, nor suspected my unworthiness of hers, as came about in sadder phases of time.

"Until the disease and the effects of morphine, which she was using liberally before I first met her, affected her temper and intelligence, Mrs. Watson was the pride and comfort of my life.

" 'When my sight goes, daughter,' she sometimes said,

in a low voice, 'I shall lose my reason.' This change came gradually. But there was another change, rarely escaped by certain patients, which somewhat influenced this good-hearted, deeply sensible peasant. The settling down to some one's care, in conditions better than any yet known, presents temptations to untrained minds which they seldom very well resist. The poor souls become insolently easy and then quite unreasonable, and if they have ever dealt in deception it madly frolics in their every act. Mrs. Watson was too kind and clever to be inebriated with good fortune in such a pitiable degree, but the symptoms were perceptible at the changing of our quarters to larger rooms and our affairs to larger hospitality, so that we soon accommodated six patients. Her relatives began to visit her, especially two daughters whose existence had never been confessed before their sudden appearance. These handsome, healthy, intemperate women were of the lowest possible type. The face of the situation changed for my dear, motherly patient. She begged, hesitatingly and gently, for all the clothing that came to us which could have been sold at the pawn shop to good advantage, 'because they—they—have nothing to put on!'

"The families about us were even less well-to-do and decent (an almost incredible feat on the part of human nature) than those we had lived among hitherto, and brawls raved around us, very questionable characters were familiar companions, and we could not be reserved and quiet to the smallest extent, for I had no desire to live among any class I entered in an offish fashion. I was quite at liberty to go away, unless I wished to remain to be of service, and this was my wish. I was under every-

body's feet—and I must say they bore with me very graciously. Mrs. Watson was there to share all my experiences. As a result on her part, she was re-contaminated by the intercourse afforded. She became distinctly a part once more of the element to which she had once belonged. She cracked her old jokes among the patients, in the clownish style which had been evoked by the circus ward where I had met her in the beginning. She never asked for whiskey, because she was wise enough to know that she would have to go without it, and be reproved into the bargain; but I felt sure that she was thinking of whiskey in her sad reflections towards six o'clock. My heart bounded again with happiness when some immediate distress of the poor, or some perplexity for advice in my work led her to rouse from vulgar lethargy to her noble, bright self in a moment.

"Unable as she was now to go to the Protectory without becoming very ill on the cars, I promised to have her grandson brought to see her—that angelic child, more beautiful than an infant cherub imagined by the gentlest of artists. A couple of his really exquisite curly gold-thread locks were stored in a little box which had been carried for several years in a larger bag strung about Mrs. Watson's waist, in a surreptitious style universal among the wily poor. She sometimes took these locks out of the undiscovered bag, and gazed upon them, catching light upon the gold. The boy was brought by an officer of the institution, to remain for a visit. My first glance at his rosy, healthy, clever face struck a warning shiver through my soul. He was a flourishing slip from criminal roots. His eyes had the sturdy gaze of satanic

vigor. The angel was a small danger-signal, and the danger was inevitable, too. But I insisted upon maintaining with myself that he must be reckoned as part of the bargain, in my care of Mrs. Watson. His grandmother's joy and pride were to be respected, and moreover I said to my reason that the boy could no doubt be developed out of his fate. I began to teach him the Catechism. With the utmost good nature he sat in front of me as long as I would sit, giving correct answers. 'He likes to study it better than to be idle,' said his grandmother; 'and I taught it to him myself, long ago.' His eyes took on a mystic vagueness during these lessons, and I felt certain he would tell the truth in future and be gentle instead of barbaric.

"Food was hidden away in dark corners for the cherubic, overfed pet, and his pranks and thefts were shielded and denied, and the nice clothing which I provided him with, out of our stores, with a new suit for Sundays, strangely disappeared when Willie went to call upon his mother—one of the handsome daughters. All was done with a consideration for me and a decorum worthy of high life. In a few weeks Willie had become famous in the neighborhood as the worst boy it had ever experienced, although it was lined with little scoundrels. The inmates of the house and adjacent shanties feared him, the scoundrels made circles around him as he flew from one escapade to another on the diabolical street which was never free from some sort of outrages perpetrated by young or old. Willie built fires upon the shed roofs, threw bricks that guardian angels alone averted from our heads, and actually hit several little boys at sundry times, whom

we mended in the Relief Room. He uttered exclamations that hideously rang in the ears of the profane themselves. The question was, should I let Willie be the death of us by keeping him, or should I be the death of Mrs. Watson by sending him back to the institution from which I had called him in foolish confidence? Willie held the charity in his single grasp and I wondered if he was to destroy it; a small boy with a man's intelligence, apple-cheeks and a glance of icy fire, a good heart easily touched, and a conscience that would hardly have burned in a glass furnace, it was so petrified. He delighted in the pictures of the saints which I gave him, stole those I did not give, and sold them all. I preached affectionately, and he listened tenderly, and promised to 'remember,' and was very sorry for his sins when he had been forced by an iron grasp to accept their revelation. He made a very favorable impression upon an experienced priest who was summoned to rescue his soul; and he built a particularly large bonfire on our woodshed when let go. The poor grandmother began to have severe hemorrhages, because of the shocks she received and the scoldings she gave. Before he came she used to call him 'that little angel.' Now she wisely declared that he was goodhearted. She struggled up from her cot and dressed herself in her best, and sat on the cobblestones of the yard to watch Willie, and to keep him in mind of higher things than incendiarism and theft. But she advised and aided him in his missions with property to his mother, about whose hunger and want Mrs. Watson was ever anxious. Her ungrateful purloining made me angry in my heart of hearts, and stern in my manner to her sometimes. She asked why I

was no longer a saint, and I wept, and said I loved her, and always should. But I had to send little Willie off, or bring the Protectory to Water Street. I do not think Mrs. Watson ever smiled after that, for I had dashed her dearest illusion to pieces, or perhaps I had destroyed a chance to save a soul, which she knew, by a God-given gentleness of hope, could have been saved, if I had only been heroic. She must have lost her faith in me, but she never declared this. At last her eyesight went. I happened to be looking at her from my own little room when she suddenly found herself totally blind. She turned her face from side to side—whitened with amaze, so little face left and yet so much expression—and then was motionless for several moments. The strong personality had been torn up by the roots. A lordly arrogance which had been creeping over her demeanor for some months, melted away, and she became usually bright and patient, though unsmiling and a little foolish. Sometimes, however, she was bitter and sarcastic, and assured us all that she was neglected and starved, though she was our first thought. A little crowd of patients kept me apart from her, though I never ceased to 'dress' her face, and slept near enough to aid her at all times; and every one was glad to nurse her, for the sake of her happier days, when silver speech came from her kindly tongue. But I resented her having affectionate patience with her low, unfilial children, and her want of that uprightness which I preferred, and her half insane complaints when we did our best. She perceived this by my brief, cold answers when she was putting me to the test, and I daily grieved over my want of magnanimity! and I won tender words

from her once more, only to resent her unreasonable sallies again. I proved a thousand times that charitable acts and laborious services are no better than tares when the spirit does not speak to the soul we serve in full and humble accord.

"As I sat by her simple black coffin, in our shanty room, before taking her to our lot for burial, I had no thought for anything but the fact that I was a poor friend to the poor, a heartless judge of a kinder heart than my own, and a darker failure in better light than the woman who had often prayed for me, and never injured me in the least. Had I not injured her?

"All one can conclude is, that God may have special constitutional clauses of mercy for those who try to reach heaven by Alpine climbing, and fall into a crevasse."

VI

THE HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

It is almost incredible how humble were the beginnings of Rose Hawthorne Lathrop's work. Except that there are a number of stories of similar instances in the history of charity, in which devoted women gave themselves to some special work and then found that it gradually grew under their hands like the Church itself from the mustard seed, smallest of all seeds, to a tree in which the birds of the air might find refuge, it would be quite impossible to believe that this little apartment on Water Street was witnessing the beginning of a great work. Fortunately for us we have the story of that humble beginning from an eye witness who herself soon became an important part of what she saw. Miss Alice Huber of Louisville, Kentucky, who had heard of Mrs. Lathrop's work, came to her with a letter of recommendation from Father Kent Stone. That son of two old American families who, before becoming a convert to Catholicity and afterwards a member of the Passionist order, had been the president of Kenyon and Hobart Colleges, knew and appreciated Mrs. Lathrop's work. Miss Huber had some diffculty in finding Mrs. Lathrop's house in the crowded twisted streets of lower Manhattan, but finally she found it and, in spite of the rather deterrent aspect of the situation, joined Mrs. Lathrop in her work for the cancer poor. Miss Huber

continued to be her right hand until Mother Alphonsa's death, and then succeeded her as the superior of the community. She herself became Mother Rose, and her story is interesting for us here because it throws so much light on Mrs. Lathrop's work from its earliest stage. It enables us, moreover, to see how the work for the destitute cancer patients of New York's Lower East Side looked to one who, knowing nothing of city slums, was attracted to it—apart from her desire to devote herself to care for others—more by the charm of the personality of Mrs. Lathrop than for any other reason.

"In the afternoon of December 15, 1897, I started out with a letter of introduction from Father Fidelis Stone, C.P. (who was at that time in Rome), to find Mrs. Lathrop. I knew that she was working among the cancerous poor on the lower East Side of New York, and from the time I had accidentally read about her work until I met her, she was more or less in my mind.

"I found Water Street after some difficulty, but when I came to 668 I hesitated going in; it was a dilapidated frame building, there was no bell, and the door leading into the hall was open. Some children playing about called out, 'If you are looking for Mrs. Lathrop, go to that door,' pointing to one in the rear of the hall. I went to the door and knocked; it was opened by a very untidy woman, with loosely done-up hair, who wore a rather short red wrapper, with the underskirt hanging below, another woman, older than the first, was ironing in the room (which proved to be the kitchen); she stood still as I entered, holding the iron in her hand, to hear what I had to say. I was shown into a good-sized room opening

from the kitchen (afterwards I learned that this room was the living room and dispensary; sometimes it served also as a bedroom when an extra patient came in), and the untidy woman called out, 'A young lady to see you, Mrs. Lathrop.' A fair, bright-faced woman (who was bandaging up an old woman's leg) rose from her work and came forward to meet me. I handed her the letter, she glanced at it and said, 'Have you been in Rome?' I replied, 'No.' 'Do sit down,' she said, 'until I finish and then we can have a long talk.' I sat down on a green sofa, the only comfortable thing in the room, and glanced about; everything was clean, but as crowded, poor and simple as could be; Mrs. Lathrop was beautiful and youthful-looking, with a mass of rich auburn hair; she wore a nurse's dress and her manner of dealing with the old women was cheerful and simple. The old women themselves were not over-clean, and were exacting in their demands; one seemed a good-natured little person, the second a hard-working woman, and the third was a cross old lady with a stick which she planted firmly before her and gazed fiercely upon her companions. (I had the pleasure of improving the acquaintance of all three later on, and found the old lady with the stick quite as fierce as she appeared to be.) After a time Mrs. Lathrop finished her work and sat down near me for a talk; we talked for a long time (at least Mrs. Lathrop did). I was debating in my mind whether or not I would offer to help her, if only for a few hours each week—the neighborhood, the patients, the untidy women in the kitchen all seemed repulsive to me, and yet I could not make up my mind to leave without offering to do something to help her out, so I

offered to come one afternoon each week; by this time the inhabitants of the kitchen were bordering on distraction over my long visit, so I rose to take my departure.

"Mrs. Lathrop accompanied me to the street door to point out the most direct way to the Grand Street Ferry. I looked at her as she stood there—the only bright object in all that ugliness and misery—and as I looked a great feeling of pity and affection filled my heart for her, and though since that eventful day my faith in human nature has sadly changed, my faith and affection for Mrs. Lathrop always remained the same. The following Tuesday I came to help in the dispensary. I must say that I felt intense disgust that first time, but Mrs. Lathrop seemed so cheerful and happy, and looked so pleadingly at me as I was leaving that I said I could come again. After a while I came two afternoons of each week, and in a few months' time resolved to leave the world and come to live with Mrs. Lathrop. It was only then that I began to realize the sacrifice and hardships of her life; it was work early and late, sometimes far into the night; we were surrounded, for the most part, by a low class of people; we had no time for reading, I could not even write a letter, the change (from home life) was so great; the patients groaned, the women in the kitchen rattled pots and pans, and the people in the neighborhood never seemed to go to bed, and I became extremely homesick. About that time Mrs. Lathrop became very ill and everything fell on my untrained shoulders; however, she soon recovered and all went on as usual. We were at that time extremely poor—boxes served as chairs, and we ate in the kitchen with the untidy women and some of the pa-

tients who were able to be about, as there was no other place. The Summer of 1898 was an intensely hot one, the Water Street tenement quarters became almost unbearable, the walls were filled with bugs, and when it rained the ceiling of the room which Mrs. Lathrop and I occupied leaked, and pans were put about the floor to catch the water; the room was very small and opened upon one occupied by the patients. As is usually the case, the Winter was as cold as the Summer had been hot; the patients were comfortable in their beds but we almost froze; however, we managed to pull through and in the Spring, several gentlemen who were interested in the work made an effort to secure more comfortable and secluded quarters for us. Mrs. Lathrop sent out appeals and responses came from all parts of the country, and on the first day of May, 1899, we moved from Water Street to 426 Cherry Street—a comfortable, old-fashioned house, in which twelve and sometimes (with crowding) fifteen patients were kept. It had a yard in the rear, and we felt we had secured a home which seemed palatial compared to our few tenement rooms in the old frame house on Water Street."

VII

A PATIENT AFTER MOTHER ALPHONSA'S OWN HEART

Mother Alphonsa told in *Christ's Poor* the story of one of the early patients who applied for assistance at a time when there was literally no bed available to accommodate her. The patient's need was so great, so immediate and, above all, so manifest that Mother gave up her own bed, taking a couch beside her patient so that she might be ready to be of assistance at once if there should be urgent need for immediate help, for the patient was so weak when received that it seemed not unlikely that she might die during the night. Mother said to her assistant on whom devolved the duty of restraining her Superior's goodness of heart, lest her magnanimity for the sufferers should put the charity in a position where it could not accomplish its purposes, "We could not refuse; we would rather die than do it."

For those desirous to know the innermost spirit of Mother Alphonsa's work, what it accomplished by its direct relation to the sufferers for whom it was initiated, as well as the particular type of patients for whom more than any others it was founded, the secret will be revealed better than it can be secured from any other source by this little story. It tells of a poor patient at the end of her resources over whom death was impending and who

was absolutely without any help in the world but for the refuge and consolation and peace of spirit which she found at the end under Mother Alphonsa's roof:

"In a house now justly torn to bits, which several years ago stood on the East Side of New York, the Servants of Relief for Incurable Cancer had an impromptu hospital for half a dozen cancer patients, too ill to support themselves, and destitute when found by the little charity. It was a place so small and tumble-down that it surprised its friends in serving the few poor sick so well.

"These sick called it 'heaven,' because it seemed so to them. It simply carried out the simple command of Christ to harbor the harborless, and, however poor the fare, to do so with unmistakable love. The Doctors of the Church declare that Christ would have become incarnate, and would have submitted to crucifixion for the sake of saving one soul. It would, therefore, have been strange if a few women had not been willing to give their lives to carrying on a charity for the consoling of but a few souls, not desisting because no more could be embraced by the work.

"Very happily indeed the three nurses in the little hospital busied themselves around the beds occupied by cancerous women, hungry-eyed creatures despairingly racked with pain, until placed under the infirm roof at 668 Water Street, Corlear's Park. The sunlight came in at the broad, old-fashioned windows; and the constant visitors, the poor for help, or the well-to-do to help them, surged through the little low-ceiled kitchen, and ended their progress, quite amazed at the oddity of the scene, in the sitting-room, which looked like a new kind of ware-

house. It seemed to have been seized upon by a shipwrecked crew, for an unpretentious place of worship and thanksgiving. This resemblance was caused by the large, black crucifix on the wall, small devotional statues upon a table, and some wax candles, with a votive lamp hanging from above; all being arranged by force of narrow limits close to boxes of old linen and second-hand clothing, and an office-table covered with letters, not far from another table holding salves and medicines. As like as not, a poor person in great pain would be having her afflicted ankle 'dressed' by one of the nurses behind a screen in this very room, the only one in which to receive guests; for to tell the truth, people of any means at all were secondary in importance in this harbor of the harborless, much as they were esteemed and needed.

"So the nurses really congratulated themselves, for everyone was comfortable, unless it was perhaps a visitor in comfortable circumstances. If the rooms were crowded, many little conveniences had, nevertheless, been contrived to avoid awkwardness and annoyance. Having thrown aside any demand for conventional dignity or esteemed ease, there is no telling how much delight there was among the members of the family in a sense of inherent self-respect, and enjoyment of every pleasant event or object that happened to enliven the day. The accommodations at any rate were nicer than ship's berths would have been. Even the warehouse sitting room had an air of neatness, and all felt that they were well prepared for a term of usefulness and good courage. Still, the directress went so far as to promise that (if she could possibly help it) there should be no more acceptance of patients

426 Cherry Street

until there was a vacancy in one of the beds already installed, or until additional rooms could be hired.

"There came a knock at the door.

"It was early summer, and the sunlight flooded the narrow hall outside the rooms on the ground floor. This passage-way had its front and back entrances always open, being much used on account of a rear tenement at one side of the cobble-stoned yard, and was sure to blaze with any sunlight that was abroad. The day the knock came was one of those which gloss over thoughts of hardship, and exhilarate the sparrows into a profusion of twitterings. On such a day tragedy seems more than ever unlikely to step in. The door was gladly opened to the applicant for a word upon whatever subject;—but it was no ordinary sorrow that became evident at the first glance.

"The woman who stood at the threshold was tall, ladylike, elderly, pale, and shabbily-dressed in black. A consciousness of her malady assailed the nurses.

" 'What do you wish?' was asked.

" 'Oh, I am very tired!' she sighed.

" 'Come in here, then, and sit down.'

" 'No! I cannot come in. Do you not perceive why?'

" 'I insist,' cried the directress. 'You need a long rest.'

" 'No one,' the woman groaned, 'will let me come near them any more. Give me a chair out here.'

"This was done, and wine of a fine quality, kept for the last hours of the sick, was given to her; and she revived, and was able to go on speaking. 'I need your help. I have read about your nursing of the cancerous poor. I am one of them. It is hard to come to you. I was too proud to do it, until I became so ill, and so obnoxious to

people around me.' At every sentence she nearly fainted from weakness and abased dignity. It was an agony beyond description, and the two nurses wept. She had command, motions of extreme nicety of meaning, and a bearing that held the attention; and she also possessed the searching eloquence of real life in an unusual situation of misery, when each word and tone seems uttered by our own lips.

" 'What shall I do, if you will not receive me as a patient?' she suddenly exclaimed, while the nurses stood in silence and tears, puzzled by her pride and their own poverty; the latter preventing their doing such a thing as to hire rooms, at once, in which the invalid might be tended. 'I did not know how it was here—so small, and you, so poor yourselves. You cannot take me, can you?'

" 'We are hardly able to help you,' said the directress. 'All our beds are full.'

"A hush fell upon the woman, which was deathlike. The Servants of Relief waited, wondering what was in her mind. She was deathly white, but she began to rise from her chair.

" 'Then there is nothing for me but suicide,' she said. 'I will go.'

"The directress put her arm around her.

" 'Oh, you are not a Catholic, if you can speak of suicide as a possible thing for you.'

" 'No, I am not a Catholic. Would that prevent my being admitted here?'

" 'No, indeed! The only difficulty is, that we are so crowded now.'

" 'What shall I do? They wish to turn me out of my room immediately, and I may not be able to persuade them to keep me much longer. They are afraid of me. I am all alone. When I try to support myself, everyone avoids me. They start back when I approach them. I have been obliged to keep myself apart, until all my earnings are gone, except a small remnant. I read about your work many times, and I hoped you would help me, at the last.'

"The directress said: 'Wait one moment, and sit down again till I can come back.'

"She motioned to her assistant to come into the kitchen, and she shut the door. Both were trembling, as they took each other by the hand and looked keenly into each other's eyes.

" 'In spite of my promise, we cannot let her go, can we?' the directress whispered.

"The assistant could not speak, except by the smile which was always ready, in misfortune and rejoicing, alike.

" 'Would you take her? We must,' persisted the directress.

" 'How can we?' sobbed the other nurse.

" 'Would you turn her away?' the directress demanded, knowing that she spoke to the tenderest heart in the world (now, to the sorrow of the charity, dead) although clear-headed, good sense was not wanting to this companion. She went on confidently: 'No, you could not; nor will I. We would die instead. It is just for such cases that we have attempted this work.'

"The door was opened immediately, that this good news might be given to the poor wayfarer. She was crouching against the wall, where she sat in a frail heap upon the chair, as if she had never expected the door to open again, except to permit her hoped-for friends to condemn her to pain and misery unassisted.

" 'We will take you here!' were the words which aroused her, in a flash of joy.

"She smiled and murmured: 'Thank God!'

" 'Come right in, and we will set up a bed for you,' said the directress.

" 'Oh, not yet. I can manage for several weeks more,' was the unexpected reply. 'But I want a place to die in, where I shall be kindly treated. God bless you for your promise to receive me. You will see me again soon, when my money is quite used up. Oh, thank you for saying I may come!'

"Such a decision on the part of a person so faint and ill was a great disappointment to the directress, as she knew all that the invalid would suffer, which might be avoided or ameliorated. But nothing could change her mind. Her persistence in her wish to take care of herself as long as she could move, and her terrible need of immediate care, were equally abnormal facts in this ever abnormal field of cancerous work. She said good-bye, assuring the nurses that she would return, when near death; and so crept away.

"It seemed unlikely that she could ever manage to reach the little Home again. So ill, so nearly spent in breath and pulse, how could she contrive to live alone, securing food, even for a day? But the iron will which had been

trained to authority, no doubt, in former circumstances of ease and culture, had made so strong an impression upon the directress that she often saw, in her musings, the forlorn lady standing once more at the door, her arm braced against the wall, haughtily gazing at the nurses out of her deadly faintness; proud of heart, and so regarding disaster as a foe whose sword-thrusts were to be parried with the nicest art; yet nobly conceding her defeat when it came, at the threshold of a charity so poor, and evidently only for the poor. It could be seen how she had gone on for so long without revealing her hidden woe to anyone. She was of heroic material, and would have been tortured inch by inch without opening her lips, for a cause so dear to her as dignity.

"In three weeks, at dusk, we heard her knock at the door, measured and distinct and quite unmistakable.

" 'It is Miss Mason,' said the assistant, looking over her shoulder, with a start. The directress had also instantly known that it was the appeal of that poor soul. 'She seems very ill,' the assistant added, upon opening the door.

"The newly-arrived patient was indeed at the last step of her life. She was bowed and haggard. The nurses drew her into the sitting room, apart. Here a bed had long been awaiting her, concealed behind a screen, in necessary defiance of visitors. The directress told her assistant to leave the room.

" 'Let me help you,' the latter said, most urgently.

"But the case was too horrible to allow the directress to feel justified in imposing any of its care upon another than herself.

"She stood facing the collapsed form, seated upon a comfortable couch in the centre of the room.

"'My heart is so weak!' the woman whispered. 'I thought I should die on my way here.'

"It was impossible to go on, before silently gazing upon this heroic creature. She was like a corpse, yet her magnificent will and invincible self-respect had made it possible for her to impell herself towards the tenement Home, when the last flash of individual power had come. Such a combination of complete wreck and complete courage was enough to keep the directress spellbound for a brief space.

"Refreshment was given to her (and she seemed ravenous, because probably unable to move to get provisions for some time past); and then the preparation of the patient for the bed was undertaken. Her outer clothing, even, was of necessity cut off. She detested assistance, and the directress, to satisfy her, waited over and over again until the proud wreck had convinced herself that she could do nothing with her arms. But she came out of her stupor when she began to realize that her clothing was to be burned, because the directress was obliged to refuse to hang it up near her. She eagerly commanded that the articles should be laid upon the bed. As the black silk jacket and waist were quilted and heavy, the directress did not know but that she consigned a considerable sum of money to the flames in burning them; but this could not be prevented. The brightened glance in the large gray eyes of the patient, and the intense interest startled from her whole face, strongly suggested that the absorbing charm of money upon those who dote on power and

policy was enthralling her. The intense excitement, however, over this immaterial materiality, subsided under the hand of death, standing beside her.

"None of the ghastly circumstances into which the directress had precipitated herself had ever equalled the present situation. No patient had ever been so unimaginably terrible to her, at that early period in her experience. It was two hours before the woman was in a state satisfactory to the nurse; and, after graciously whispering her thanks, and saying that she was at ease for the first time in a year, Miss Mason gently slept. Her nurse now looked upon her with a happiness not to be described, and greater than most happiness had been.

"The directress slept on the couch near the patient, fearing that her death might suddenly occur. But the invalid was much refreshed in the morning, and was able to sit up for some hours. The doctor said, nevertheless, that she could hardly live till night; the cancer over her heart being so deep, and the disease having attacked her elsewhere, also. In truth, she was penetrated by cancer, in most of the body.

"She talked intelligently and graciously, in low, short sentences; answering questions about her church, her attendance there, her love of God, and preparation to meet Him. She was a Baptist. She wished to have her Bible brought from her trunk, which had arrived; and when she was urged to see her minister, she finally consented to do so, giving his name and address.

"When he came she was lying in her coffin, near the bed which had given her a short respite of rest. The minister prayed beside her body; and was very sorry for

her sufferings. He thought that he remembered her face as one that had mingled with the congregation of his church.

"Her Bible was marked in pencil at certain passages appropriate to her loneliness and misery, words of comment being daintily written on the margin of the page. It seemed evident that she had devoutly appealed to God, and there can be no doubt that He had greatly befriended her.

"She was buried with her own money, found among her effects—forty dollars. She had said that she had kept the money for her burial, but the nurses supposed that she was delirious in saying this. To the last moment of her remaining upon earth, she had continued to show that she was honorable, and her word one to be redeemed.

"She had been a pedlar of small wares, though probably for only a short time, as her last means of support before her death; at least so the nurses were led to conclude, on finding a quantity of pencils, court-plaster, etc., in her trunk.

"She thus disappeared from earth; and as the last of her family, decently closed its record. Her memory remained with the Servants of Relief as an always sweet recollection, often mentioned, and regarded as a perfect example of the misery for which the charity was undertaken, in order to lessen and console it."

It is easy to understand the consolation that came to Mother, thus to have been permitted to care for what she would have called rather enthusiastically an ideal patient, one who had brought with her in all her pitiableness "a happiness not to be described." Here was one

who had faced death as no soldier on the battlefield does and who insisted on not imposing herself on others for so long as she could possibly help herself and who died with her face toward duty as she saw it, unflinchingly until the end. She was only a street peddler such as most of us are inclined to think of as little better than beggars, and yet she had the soul of an inspiring human being, trying to accomplish to the best of her ability the expression of her personality in life. Even in her last moments she was still determined not to be an imposition on others, and she reminded them that she had money put by for her burial. Her epitaph might very well have been the words Mother Alphonsa wrote of her: "To the last moment of her remaining upon earth, she continued to show that she was honorable and her word one to be redeemed."

VIII

APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA

Mother Alphonsa encountered so much misunderstanding of her work, even among those who might have been expected to be sympathetic with it, that the early numbers of her little magazine, *Christ's Poor,* contain a number of articles in which she endeavored to make people understand the realities of her position and her relationship to the destitute sufferers of cancer.

At this time she was aided by the fact that sympathy had been aroused among the American people by the neglect of the soldiers during the Spanish-American War, and this sympathy served to attract attention to other needs. The war had revealed how much of possible neglect there might be even where there were institutions supposed to be organized for the purpose of caring for certain classes of patients. Where such special institutions were lacking, the need would be all the greater, and so Mother Alphonsa wrote in *Christ's Poor* [1] what may well be called her *Apologia Pro Vita Sua.*

This little chapter concludes the discussion of the real meaning of charity and its place in modern life. Unfortunately the word, charity, has come to carry an innuendo that represents it as something quite different from what it is: that personal care and attention to those in need

[1] November, 1901, vol. 1, No. 4.

which led to the commendation of the Good Samaritan and to the Lord's expression with regard to his activity, "Go thou and do likewise." Mother Alphonsa would have the word, charity, reserved exclusively for kindness that is Christlike. She told better than any one else could, just what she was trying to accomplish in her little chapter, "Some of the Reasons Why We Work":

"To cull the intelligent verdict of brilliant minds against a simple attention to the poor, whereas persons at constant close range know that simple and direct methods are best, is very much like paying a large bill to a doctor of eminence for the treatment of a physical difficulty which a country-woman on a farm would relieve in a homely and unimpressive manner. Considering the length of time that intellect has already taken to decide how to manipulate charity, without really progressing at all on intellectual lines, but only on those which at least have a semblance of cardiac action, it seems pardonable to turn to Christ, and examine His spirit and decrees. Our Lord never rejected an expedient because it was homely, and said not one word about the evil effect upon the poor of giving them two coats if they asked for one—that is treating them with excessive love. We all know perfectly well that when it comes to money, we will be mean if we are capable of being mean; and that if we love our neighbor, the money test will alone prove whether we are self-deceived; unless, like St. Peter, we give something immediately beneficial, which a mind not strained by culture can instantly recognize as akin to gold. Severe theories will never satisfy a hungry person, even if they eradicate poverty in the twenty-first century. But Christ did not ask

us to eradicate poverty—on the contrary we are allowed to make it at home with us. The poor are a very valuable opportunity for kindness, and help for them is never degrading unless it is falsely given. We are many of us trying to learn how to help the poor without false charity; and now we see for ourselves that it must be done personally by picked people. St. Louis is especially eager to train the charity workers, so that no ignoramuses may clog charity by blundering mistakes. The sign language is wearying the more advanced savages among us, and we are dreaming of speech. Nothing in the world will prevent genius from creating epics of charity after a time, but it seems long to wait; and if one is dying in destitution, it is almost generous to be glad that some day Chaucers and then Shakespeares in charity will be giving racial ecstasy to the broad earth, being the great bloom from seeds sown by Christ and His friends in the Spring of compassion.

"*Charities* quotes the Empress Frederick (whose noble sincerity and vigor of thought make her opinion invaluable as a type) in her saying that charity should not be regarded too much as a matter of benevolence, but that a niggardly gift or refusal is sometimes a real boon to the unfortunate who begs for relief. One knows the value of such austere impudence in religion; it can form character in masterly style. But of course a master must handle so cruel a weapon. The surgery of mediocre pruners can damage growth fatally. Moreover, it would seem that in the hands of charity such a weapon would have little chance of doing more good than a scalpel in the vocation of a nurse. Austerity is opposed to charity, which soothes.

It would clear up matters agreeably if the word 'charity' was used exclusively for kindness that is Christlike, and if it were remembered that the greatest of all virtues is too good to be associated even with imperial niggardliness. No doubt it is true that to keep the state from tottering worldly wisdom must prevail; the care of the poor must be practical in the accepted sense, and theorists allowed to enforce their views when their views smooth waves, and leave luxury alone in its sad contentment. Well may a sensible Empress advise that there should be 'the greatest possible decrease in the numbers of the poor, by the removal of the causes of poverty existing in the poor themselves.' When this nice point has been settled, poverty will be hoary with age, and crowns will have comfortably changed places down a vast line of heads. The science of imperial or civil peace is not by any means the science of the peace of God. The Empress was a woman of the utmost kindness trammelled with common sense. The Queen Elizabeth of Hungary was a woman of the utmost kindness and charity. If time made any alterations in so vital a matter as the best methods of charity, Christ would have told us so. Speaking by the Holy Spirit now, He has not said a word to contradict His first teaching, simple, direct, unavoidable, leading to personal sacrifice and immediate holy love. Can it be that we expect human friendship to be less questioning, more sure to answer appeal of the instant, than the greatest of the virtues, Christlike love? When we appeal to this, we should be certain indeed of receiving compassion in the form of a tender hearing, and a helping hand.

"A cry in the distance is too often what a cry from

the poor might be called, although these brethren are comparatively near us all, and are often heard from. So Cuba is within five days of us, and the soldiers wrote home (during the Spanish-American War). But how much did we know of their first terrible need of delicacies and care? The men knew all about it themselves, and the Society of the Red Cross knew. Who denied the various needs until honest testimony triumphed? Those whose signal could summon adequate help. What motives prolonged the false denial? The dignity of existing measures and the smoothness upon the surface of government. But great hearts in authority quickly called to a better sort of order the orderly criminal neglect. Red tape snapped under the sword of a general; system cringed under exceptions to a rule that was causing agony; authority itself bowed its head before men who knew the situation to be a fact which was disgraceful in a country that exists to war upon all disgraces.

"A surgeon among hundreds of wounded soldiers brings a cup of water and a little care to a few of them—all he can do he does—with a groan of appeal to Heaven; and in this feeble, though devoted way a few women see and succor suffering women who are agonized and forlorn. The officers who are questioned about the battlefield which civilians do not see make answer to us: 'It is too terrible to describe.' Nothing but personal observation can convey the dreadful scene or the deplorable need when proper provision for the wounded has not been made. I say the same thing of conditions learned by my personal observations—they are too terrible to describe, and the deplorable need of proper provision for them

strikes me with dismay. Any sensible mind could have pictured to itself what must be the conditions of a war in Cuba, yet no one gave proper attention to meeting these conditions with medical tactics of any sort, except a band of persons inspired by charity, cultivated intelligence and courage, whose offers of adequate aid were at first repulsed. In similar fashion it might be quite possible for sensible minds to realize what might be the suffering of the sick poor in a city where a dozen free beds in desirable hospitals, and an almshouse hospital and limited dispensaries, are all the provision made; with the terrible clause to be added in reflections upon the subject, that the non-paying poor receive treatment, in regard to care and kindness, that is akin to what some people would give an enemy who asked too much. If this were not true, half the miseries of poverty would melt away like a fog.

"The time employed for fitting up Montauk (Spanish-American War hospital) for dying or exhausted soldiers who had brightened America's renown, with unstinted effort and heroic patience, was wasted by the exchange of deference between officials, by the curiosity of the public instead of its activity (except, again, on the score of a few noble men and women who had thrust themselves into the business) and by the economy of a government which really wished for proper outlay. Why? Because the wrong people were believed, the wrong people were dictators and the general public did not realize its responsibilities, which are exactly as great as its powers. Camp Wikoff was not preparing for a garden party in high life, and so it was not ready.

"But officialism subsided, and politeness toward men who

gave themselves for the flag is admitted to be courtesy of the best kind. Military precision in regard to the well will preserve health; military freedom toward the sick and wounded is mere Christian decency and wisdom. An army surgeon must be honored with unquestioned ascendancy. If the sick poor were soldiers from a Cuban campaign, they would today be remembered and succored without stint of mercy; the cultivated intelligences of the city would meet together to plan immediate and lasting aid on the wisest basis, which would of course be the quickest and most generous, the Red Cross would turn its unbaffled glance upon the dilemma.

"Without the Red Cross in Cuba, how soon would the public have known the needs of the sick army, or how soon would the despairing statements of surgeons have been credited? Without the members of distinguished families in the mire at camp and in the wilderness of starvation at sea—without privates of the best blood in the worst situations of the war—how soon would the sufferings of laboring men in the regiments have aroused the nation from hovel to palace?

"Very many of the soldiers we were inclined to weep over were from the slums of New York. The women of the slums were waiting for their return or mourning over their death from those privations which it breaks one's heart to think of. Are we going to say definitely that we weep only for the sufferings of soldiers who enlisted from the cream of society? Do we believe that a wounded man on the battle-field or in the hospital tent, unrecognizable by his family, is a lovelier sight because he went to college or had thousands to spend, perhaps

unwisely? It is impossible to imagine that we should not upon the battle-field follow the example of the young men of the best families, who give their food and covering to their more humble companions at the expense of their own recovery; that we should not at least treat with as much relief the laboring man as the man who has already met with life's best advantages and can afford to suffer for a short space in this serious life of ours. Why are we so likely to look upon the question of the very poor, especially the sick poor, with contemptuous indifference? The poor are unattractive, the sick poor are nauseating. Only reflect, however, that our near relatives are often unattractive to us and that our sick friends are no more charming than any other sick persons, if they are as sick as possible. We turn from the sick poor because they displease us, not because they have sinned (the rich have done that); not because they have not treated us well (the rich do not live in true harmony); not because we believe they do not need us, but because we do not receive from them a single glow of excitement or curious pleasure. Take a pauper and place him on the steeple of a church and let the scaffolding fall, and while he falls with it the populace will tremble and weep and presently subscribe for the support of the family he leaves.

"During the Cuban war, I had with me daily as seamstress the wife of a soldier who was hoping for a furlough; one of those men whom the citizens search the horizon for in order to cheer them as they march feebly from the transports. The woman came to me with her baby on her arm, and both were nearly starved. The man had left home without a word after a long struggle

of no work and starvation or suicide. The unsuccessful man in the slums is remarkably like any other unsuccessful man. We fancy possibly that everyone enlists purely for love of country, but many of us know what other reasons may exist. It is the same in the slums, and yet how dear the returning invalid is, either the gentleman from respectful pity or the pauper from compassionate respect! Let us face the truth as the soldiers we sent faced the hill of San Juan, and pity those who are sick unto death and abandoned because they are so, whether they interest us or not; whether they soil us as a field of blood would do and present no gleam of beauty from one year's end to another; whether or not they show us brutality and crime frequently. Need the glamor of war be so powerful with us that it can cover with enthusiasm conditions similar to that destitute sickness which is ignored and which we are usually advised that it is more ladylike to disregard?

"So long as the poor are squalid and otherwise unattractive we refuse to inspect their needs, unless they live in a foreign country, Armenia or elsewhere, which makes a difference. Yet, if they were sick soldiers, we would defend them against the government itself.

"What I would assert is that pity and justice might lead us to care for the incurable poor, if we allowed ourselves to admit that pity and justice have no caste or predilections, no weakness for charm, no taste for excitement. If the public knew what our experience knows of a department of suffering, a charity for that suffering would begin to develop. I assert that a great home is needed for such a charity, that of nursing incurable cancer, quite as much as if President Roosevelt had spoken

for it or Lieut. William Tiffany had died in agony for the want of it.

"Persons who ought to know the truth say that the incurable poor are amply cared for by hospitals already at work, and that the providing of more beds and nurses for non-paying patients and incurables would be impertinent activity. The offers of the Red Cross were refused before the facts were known, in the Cuban agony. Hospital and dispensary aid for the poor continues to be unfeeling and superficial, as is well known to people at hand, though denied by those in charge. The condition of the camps was denied by those who existed to obviate neglect in them.

"There are no free beds in hospitals for incurable poor and they lie unvisited in damp basements and other improper quarters, dying from exposure, hunger and lack of medical care; or else they are shifted, roughly, perhaps, three times, at last arriving at the almshouse on the Island, usually with an experience of several hours in a stiff seat where the draught chills them. Lack of food, tents and coverings were the portion of soldiers at Montauk; or else they were 'shipped' home, as the accounts put it, no matter how inadequate the home was. The sick poor work, however desperately ill, if they can find work. If they cannot find it, they are blamed as lazy paupers, and they sink down never to rise again. The statements of soldiers too sick to work or do guard duty were sneered at by some of their officers. I suppose no one doubts these often printed facts; but I certainly do not, for a relative who went up the hill, went through a subsequent illness that left no proofs wanting.

"A high official in a large charity, so-called, told me that it was difficult to find a case of genuine destitution. The camp of Montauk 'agreeably surprised' a high official in the government, who was noticeably lowered in official standing after his approval of the camp had been cheerfully expressed.

"The sick poor need humble help, and more than two dollars a year apiece, in most instances, before they can be adequately assisted. Two dollars a year is reported as too much for each poor family calling for aid, in an American city. One would think America was a very poor Mecca. The report is like that of a charity visitor who was allowed by some rich ladies five dollars a month among fifty poor families, to supply tea and clothing when required. Her own salary was fifty dollars a month —she needed it; but the sick had at the most liberal estimate, ten cents. We are at work for those sick who get ten cents a month or nothing, unless we plead for them."

IX

THE FIRST MALE PATIENT

FROM the very beginning of her work for destitute cancer patients, Mrs. Lathrop realized that men sufferers from incurable cancer needed to be cared for as well as the women, and that her effort would be incomplete without them. Cancer is somewhat more frequent in women than men, and in those days when the X-rays were not available for diagnostic purposes, cancer in the male, because it develops more often in deeply lying internal organs, was more frequently missed and so seemed to be rarer than it actually was, but the number of incurable cancer cases among men made them the objects of care almost as much as women. As Mother Alphonsa herself said in describing her earliest work: "From the first month of our work for the relief of the incurably sick poor which began in 1896, many male cases were brought to our notice and we had been able to assist them in various ways." Some ingenuity was necessary in making provisions for them and a special appeal had to be made to the feelings of some of the charitable-minded families of the neighborhood, but as a rule something definite for their relief was accomplished. Mother Alphonsa tells the story of one of these cases which illustrates how difficult the situation for these patients was made by the advance of their disease:

"It had been possible to put one poor old man with face cancer near us to board, so that we could 'dress' his wound every day, and see that he was properly nourished and encouraged. He was very poor and very grateful; but finally the wound became so large and his condition so weak that the humble boarding house rejected him and he was again taken in charge by his daughters, who it could not be said had any intention of taking care of him. They took him in charge and neglected him. We have no money for hiring a tenement and a male nurse to assist him further in his forlorn situation." The patient had with many regrets to be left to get along as best he might under rather discouraging circumstances.

In 1899 the president of one of the western railroads, having heard of Mother Alphonsa's charitable provision for the cancer poor, wrote asking whether it would be possible for a railroad man suffering from incurable cancer to be taken care of by the little foundation. The case was a very deserving one and Mrs. Lathrop was very much disturbed over the fact that the patient could not be taken into the home in the conditions that existed. It seemed almost impossible in the situation, as it then was, to make arrangements for the accommodation of male patients. The work was carried on in crowded quarters, patients and nurses were all women, the only men who visited the house were the priest and the physician or sometimes a friendly benefactor. It appeared inadvisable to complicate the situation. The limited space in which their patients had to be cared for meant more under the circumstances than anything else in the question.

In *Christ's Poor* [1] Mother Alphonsa, as she had then become, told the story of her reaction to the letter from the western railroad president and eventually how she was pushed by the feelings it aroused, not only to a definite determination to help the destitute men cancer patients, but also to a complete actualization of her desire to care for all kinds of incurable cancer patients without any regard for sex or age or creed, provided only they were destitute. Her experience with her first man cancer patient is a moving picture of the conditions that such patients had been in before her solicitude for them created a very different situation, though lack of means at first made the effort extremely difficult. Indeed, in the eyes of her friends and also of those of her community, she was undertaking the impossible. Truth is more touching than fiction and the story of this first male patient brings out the fact that the good Mother of the cancer patients was not bent on reforming the world but just trying to do a precious though unfortunately limited task for those who needed it most.

Mother Alphonsa tells the story of how the problem of receiving the first male patient was solved:

"This letter made a deep and sad impression upon the member of the band who had always cared poignantly about the consolation of avoided cases of sickness. She could not see that a male case deserved to be avoided any more than a female case, and a number of sick men whom she had taken considerable care of, at the command of her director, had proved to her, beyond any doubt on her part, that, if no one else came to the rescue of male can-

[1] Vol. I, Nos. 9 and 10.

cer-cases she should do so, with all the folly of her inadequacy upon her. There were many persons to oppose and ridicule her desire to add this branch to her original plan. Moreover, the work attempted for women alone was poor enough, and was without sure prospects; it was already too heavy for the few women whose shoulders were expected to carry it; and it was altogether so unbusiness-like (as critics averred), and so Utopian in exaggerated outlook (more critics sneered) that to add a branch to it was out-Heroding Herod in insolence towards the public —that sensitive fragile body in the group of the human family about whom the world is chronically anxious.

"We have never thought or found the public as sensitive and incapable of self-defence as its inquiring friends claim it to be, and we thrust the idea of an annex for male patients upon its consideration. So untrammeled were we, besides, by business acumen and cowardly prudence, that although we had far more work to do than three women could manage without danger of collapse, although women desiring to join us, desired to do so but a short while after investigating our hardships, voluntary and involuntary, the prospect of perpetually and complacently refusing aid to any cancer case sufficiently in need of help to be hitherto deprived of all help whatever, did not present itself as a possible thing. Nevertheless, the case which had interested Gen. Palmer (the western railroad president) would no doubt be better off under some other arrangement than St. Rose's Home could provide, since a powerful and rich friend had taken its comfort into consideration. So the nurses replied that they were at this

time unable to give J.G. proper quarters; but they never ceased to plan for them.

"A lady called, who proved to be a visitor from the Charity Organization Society. She asked us to take a male cancer-case. We smiled. People who cared about us were begging us to stop work long enough to recuperate a little, and live a few years more. We had scarcely any money at the time, and could not pay but a few dollars toward the comfort of such a case. We answered that we were at the end of our resources, and could do nothing for men. But the member who was fanatical did not mean it. This fanatic was asked to go and see the case, and suggest something to be done. She answered that she was too much driven with hard work to call upon all the sick women whom the charity was interested in, and she had not the right to begin upon another class of sufferers with her feeble ministrations. But she secretly hoped that this answer would be rejected. It was. The lady visitor was a remarkable one—an ideal one for the position she filled. She was quiet, gentle, fervent, heroic. If such women oftener stooped to the poor, a great, sharp iceberg of a problem would begin to melt into spring loveliness.

"This charity visitor said that, begging our pardon, she must receive an affirmative answer. She had herself felt that the case was a hopeless one to deal with, and yet the refinement of the man and the pathos of his appeal had not allowed her to turn from him. She thought that if the fanatic saw him, some inspirations might suggest a scheme for keeping the case from the almshouse, whither

he begged not to be sent. The old man was a very deserving person.

"We said that, for our part, it was a question of impossibility. To see him would only add to our unhappiness, and, as he lived a long distance and we were without funds, we could neither call upon him often nor provide him with relief. It would be dishonest to pretend that we could.

"Something in the lady's face commanded a different verdict from the fanatic. She simply looked into the other's eyes—the messenger from misery gazed at the Servant of Relief, and the latter cried,

" 'I cannot go;—but I will. I will go tomorrow morning.'

" 'Come with me now,' she said. 'Tomorrow will be too late. Arrangements have been made to send him to the hospital of the almshouse on Blackwell's Island. Only my urgent pleading prevented his going before I could see you.'

" 'Wait till I get my veil and cloak.'

"Although the Servant of Relief was at that time dressed in semi-religious costume, and it was late in the afternoon, the two started out together to go up town. The patient had a hall bedroom over a liquor store.

"On her way the fanatic pondered what she could do for the case; for, although the last word from her companions had been, 'Don't you dare to promise to take charge of that patient!' still she never liked to leave a case in the lurch, after having looked up its needs.

"The terrible resolve was made to hire a tenement of two or three rooms in the near neighborhood of St. Rose's

St. Rose's Free Home (71 Jackson Street)

Free Home, trusting to donations to continue the expense, and, by changing our errand man (another destitute person, brother of a female cancer-case, who are both now dead from the disease) from a room over a stable to this proposed tenement annex, to secure an attendant to wait somewhat upon the sick man. One of the rooms could be used for storage, of which we were in great need, as our little home and its back yard were upkempt with surplus second-hand gifts, awaiting an addition to our space.

"These details, mused upon as the car sped to the patient's region of the city, were eventually realized, though under the pressure of great obstacles, and with a running-fire for months of severe opposition on the part of the fanatic's best friend and companion, to whose perfectly wise comments nothing but silence could safely be brought forward.

"When the Charity Organization visitor and the Servant of Relief arrived at their destination, it turned out that the dingy building could be entered only by the liquor store side door, into which a drunken wretch was reeling. To the bartender, who answered our ring (a blear-eyed and horrid looking creature, unlike some specimens of the profession whom the fanatic had come across in her labors among the poor) the cancer-nurse said, with all the law for endorsement: 'Oh, do you let such a drunken man as that have more to drink?'

" 'Why, he's not drunk!' the bartender exclaimed. Putting on an air of dignity, he added: 'No man with too much liquor in him will get another drop here.'

"The fanatic could only look at him reprovingly. Such lies were an old story. She had ceased to expect to con-

vert the wicked; she hoped merely to befriend victims, if her commiseration could envelope them for but one moment in their lives.

"The patient's little room was nearly filled by a double bed. The old man had expected us; that charity visitor had promised to bring the fanatic back with her. He had made up his mind that we would remove him immediately, and he was dressed in a gentlemanly attire of light brown tweed.

"Although thus dressed, he lay upon the coverlid of the bed, and he was deathly pale. He was almost totally blind, and nearly stone deaf, and unable to speak more than a few mumbled words. The cancer was on one side of his mouth. His motions were those of a gentleman of high extraction; his half dead eyes were pale gray, with a flash and air about them that spoke of former beauty. Everyone had been afraid of him. Dust and soiled utensils lay upon the table; empty glass milk-jars stood upon the floor; and a few books and small photographs of friends had become ossified in their places on the littered table, where the above mentioned cups and spoons and glasses had intruded, and were unremoved for cleansing. Cowardice was in evidence on all sides. The saloon keeper had run upstairs to speak with us, and said that he alone was willing to wait upon the man. At this point the charity visitor said she must go, and the fanatic could but assent.

"The patient was a Second Lieutenant, and had a pension of eight dollars a month. This was not enough to induce anybody to continue to care for him, and he had been told to go away. As he could not walk but a few

steps, and his cancer of the face prevented him from hiring a room elsewhere, to be told to go away was a tragedy —for him.

"A doctor had been attending him for a long time, ever since work in an elevator had been refused to him because of the cancer. The doctor now wished him to go to Bellevue, assuring him that at Bellevue, although inoperable, he would be retained until his death; and saying that he himself had influence there and would see to it that the almshouse hospital on 'the Island' never swallowed him up. The saloon keeper told the fanatic all this, and she gave him just the same glance of reproach that she had shot upon the blear-eyed bartender. Bellevue at that time had never been known to keep an inoperable case of cancer till it died, unless it died at once. With iron firmness it kept to the rule of transportation, however unable to be transported the patient was, and however long-drawnout the transportation might be. But the fanatic had ceased to expect to see a perfect Bellevue for the destitute, and was silent; hoping however in the possibilities of the next thousand years.

"The old gentleman was of the genuine—not the spurious and obnoxious—English type. Every line expressed real refinement, even real nobility of nature. He did not wish to be sent to 'the Island,' for he had as much objection to associating with foul tramps as Lord Rosebery would have. I quite comprehended why the charity visitor, who was a genuine lady, had revolted against having this destitute creature placed with abandoned scoundrels. Such things constantly happen, and he might have found a congenial soul or two; but the scene, the generality of

companions, the system of pauper protection, would have been very far worse than death to the Second Lieutenant we saw before us.

"The lady's sincere opinion and tender compassion could not contemplate for him, by any twisting of argument, the soulless indifference of this final degree of neglect.

"The only ostensible friend the patient had on earth stood beside me, gazing at the prostrate figure with a strange expression of face hard to describe. He was a bulky, rosy man in his prime, accustomed to think himself particularly good; and he was under the impression that he had been something of a martyr in taking care at all of a person who had gone so imprudently, even rashly, far into a loathsome disease. The expression held a look that could easily be read if not put into words, as much as to say, that since the old man was so near death he was of small account, his past notwithstanding. His only friend thought this. No wonder that the pallor of the unfortunate invalid was whiter than anything else in the world. The saloon keeper, in short, counting upon the deafness and blindness of the patient, said to the fanatic in a loud voice that this cancer-case should be put out of his misery by an overdose of morphine.

"Her nerves did not waver, for she had become familiarized with this thought, very frequent among a certain class of doctors.

" 'Are you not a Catholic?' she quietly asked. 'Catholics usually feel respect for life, and believe that each moment is given by God to hold out to us another chance for reparation and the purifying of our souls.'

" 'But the doctor himself said it was more merciful to finish him than to let him live!' said the saloon keeper, becoming more and more delighted with the proposition, and sending at the corpse-like form more of the cattle-killing glances which had stirred the fanatic's disgust up to a five hundred degree of heat from the moment of his entrance into the poor hole of a bedroom.

"The patient had been watching and listening. A long association with the dying had trained the Servant of Relief to understand that this was so; but her endeavors to check the sturdy tones of the only friend had been laughingly set aside, because, as the liquor dealer shouted 'he can't hear any more!'

"The aroused faculties of a crucial moment are almost miraculous in their force, and the patient had become as mentally alert as a man in his prime. I tried to keep a cheerful expression upon my face every instant, and chatted about the proposed murder as if it were the latest news in fashionable life. But the gaze of his friend had been too much like an unsheathed sword to leave the old soldier in doubt as to the theme broached. The well can never be sure how much the dying overhear, how much they discover in the unguarded expression of one's face.

"The old man struggled to a sitting posture on the side of the bed, and took a bit of paper and a pencil, and with graceful deliberation and neatness of touch wrote the following words, with a slight groan or two that told of his agony during the effort:

" 'Repeat to me all that you are saying, or I shall imagine everything!'

"The gentlemanly instinct, than which nothing can be

keener, had enabled him to make deductions that hit the bull's eye.

"The Servant of Relief sat down near him, and, conceding all she could to the fierce injunctions of the folks at the Home of St. Rose of Lima (who herself had a very gentle way with the destitute) explained that it was thought best that he should go to Bellevue. She said that at the almshouse hospital on the Island he would have more care than he could get where he now was, and that it would be a valiant act of submission to the will of God if he assented to this result of his disease.

" 'You have been a brave soldier,' she said. 'This would be the finest thing you ever did.'

"The fanatical woman was opposed to telling the patient that black was white, simply because he was dying. She showed him that 'the Island,' not a luxurious stay at Bellevue, was, most likely all that he had to look forward to in this life.

"The pallor vanished. The man roused himself. A little of the soldiery mettle flashed forth. He wrote more vigorously. If he were to die, he would not die like a thing without honor, without inches, without the medal of a Second Lieutenant, without a sword-thrust on his own part. He wrote that he hoped the fanatic would take him to her hospital. He did not care how humble our arrangements were, or where he was put; but he did want to be under our care.

"All the answer that could be made (because the Servant had promised not to conclude any arrangements without consultation at home) was that, 'she would do her best for him.' It was a good deal like telling a drowning

man to wait patiently on the next wave till the life saver went back to the shore for a while. The fanatic, though longing to be a little generous, evidently had some self-restraint in store for occasions. It was a hard moment for her, and a brave moment for him. She held out her hand to him, and something in her look and tone expressed the feeling in her heart. She meant by her brief sentence that her best would leave nothing better to be done. The old soldier knew it; he had believed in her word. His blessed eyes shone. The contraction in them was lifted away. He rose to his full height, standing beside the bed a tall, stately figure, pale again as death, but with the ghostly recognition of a spirit who is immortal, in the presence of a fraternity that fears neither darkness nor storm, but recoils at falsity and brutality. The dying know the qualities upon which they may rely. Longfellow's *Eve of Pentecost* expresses the hunger of a soul that has been outraged by the meanness of the race, and seeks the more honorable representatives of our nature for a word of mercy. The patient and the messenger of relief clasped hands, their eyes met in a frank gaze, he bowed as if in the presence of royalty; but not as a servile beggar, rather as a personage of distinction, with perfect dignity. The man who had scorned him a little while before, because he lay so devoured by disease and weak, looked like a cur (and seemed to feel like one) in contrast with this commanding and gracious personality.

"That night a letter was written to the priest of the parish in which the patient dwelt, and who had not seen him for some time, and our feeble but enthusiastic old errand man set eagerly forth to bring an answer, which

should give permission to transfer the patient to other quarters than Bellevue.

"The answer was, that the priest would immediately send the old soldier to St. Vincent's Hospital, where he would be most comfortable, and remain in peace. According to all experiences at that time, no cancer-case that was inoperable would remain at St. Vincent's, but would at once go to Bellevue, so the fanatic felt convinced that a non-triumphal progress to 'the Island' would begin, when the patient set out for St. Vincent's. She was pondering what to do, during the next day, when she was obliged to attend to other urgent matters. The following morning a letter came from the charity visitor, begging the fanatic to hasten to Bellevue, as the patient we had visited together was there, and was to be sent to 'the Island' without delay, unless we of St. Rose's Home took charge of him.

"The plan formed by the fanatic now broke forth with the speed of a summer trolley-car on a rustic road. Having donned her veil and cloak, she made an appeal to her companions that was forcible and humble and yet unswervable. All night she had been imagining what to do if bad news arrived, and she was able to fly from one point to the next without a single interruption. Rooms were found and hired across the street, and they were being scrubbed in a twinkling afterwards; furniture was taken out of the backyard and put into them; everyone was in a fever of excitement to make the old man comfortable (except the wise companions of the fanatic, who had at any rate given their consent to the sixty-mile an hour proceedings); and a carriage rushed up to the door

of St. Rose's Home, which immediately flew up to Bellevue, holding the fanatic and the feeble errand man, side by side, both breathless with fear lest the Second Lieutenant had been already sent across the East River with a broken spirit and a clouded farewell to his fellow-beings.

"The directress found the old soldier safely protected in one of the cots of a ward in Bellevue, with a kindly doctor not far away, who promised to keep him until sent for; that is, till the afternoon or even till the next morning. The ward looked like a skeleton, with a few white grave-cloths clinging to it, being a gray, long-drawnout room, with white-covered cots. The human element seemed accidental, and was very much subdued and still. Such is the best system when a certain mechanical order must be observed or anarchy prevail; but it is a rare inducement to those who can, that they should provide for the human element a triumphant supremacy over rooms and cots and silence. Of the depths and subtleties of a great city hospital we need not speak. The old man's eyes shone large and glad as the Servant of Relief approached him, and he said a few mumbled words with sufficient distinctness for the ear close to his lips to hear them:

" 'I thought you'd come!'

" 'Then you really wish to leave this nice ward, and the kind doctor, and take chances in our poor quarters?'

"The sick man's eyes answered with a sudden longing reproach.

" 'Oh, I am only too glad that you want to come to us!' the directress said. 'I will send this man and a carriage this very afternoon, to bring you to the cosy rooms I am preparing. Be ready at two o'clock.'

"Oh, the gratitude of those eyes! He was so happy that the world of trouble which the directress had brought down like a falling roof upon her head, took its right relation, in her consciousness, to the need of a brother; and her little bit of kindness towards a long life of ever growing misfortune seemed too slight a balancing to satisfy God. We give so little of those things God asks for, as a niggard fingers a copper coin jealously in giving alms. O Christ! why will we not give you all we possess! The directress realized that worry and fatigue, criticism and scorn, are vapors beside one solid act for God and our neighbor.

"The young doctor, gentle and alert, weary and surprised that all life had to offer a doctor was so wretched a panorama of despairs, with the kindness of a true man, courteously entered into the eagerness of the patient, and showed a desire to humor him; and no matter how disenchanted with everything connected with the skeleton in grave-cloths which had him in its clutches during his apprenticeship, mustered cordiality of speech and tone in promising to have the old man ready, and braced up for the long drive. But he hoped the directress would send when she expected to do so, as the hospital was crowded. She caught the precautionary hint, and would have secured a carriage in time for the transfer if it had been necessary to borrow Cinderella's coach.

"To see our first male patient in his neat room at our tiny annex of St. Rose's Home, was worth the battle it had cost. All was great success at each point. He was only very pale and faint after the journey—his heart was as light as a child's. He greeted the directress like a

prince, with welcome concessions of praise; and he was as humbly grateful as superior people always know is to evince the truest dignity. He grew handsome once more; he ordered about his flunky (the errand man) in style; he was happy, gentle, stately; instead of dying in a few days as had been predicted by the doctors, he lived three months.

"These months were far from unhappy, though full of severe suffering. In the first place, he had his heart's wish, a return to neglected religious duties. His beads were on his wrist ready for Paters and Aves; his prayer book was always in his hand or close to him. The references to his faith, the prayers said beside him, the visits of the priest, the little sacred pictures given him, all these ties between God and our human nature, simple, pitifully humble, but dear to eyes and ears as reminders to weak flesh of divine strength, gave to his splendid eyes a soft joy and grateful smiling glance that told of a magnanimous nature. He never boasted of his past. He did not need to do so, for he showed in every line and gesture that he had been the son of a distinguished family. The story told us about him was to his credit. But cancer of the jaw had prevented him from providing for himself, long before he was too ill to be endured in any habitation, because not properly treated with antiseptics. The Servants of Relief are successful in making the condition of almost any cancer-case very much less distressing to others than is usual.

"The old gentleman liked to be read to, for the cancer began to affect the sight of one eye. It was very seldom that the nurses could read even a paragraph to him, and

the local janitor did not read with enough erudition to satisfy the fastidious invalid. He did not complain, but he lifted one eyebrow. The directress longed for a reader whom she could summon, and sometimes did so, and even found a young man willing, her nephew, who happened to call one day and was taken over to the annex forthwith. It was a rare event to find anyone with time and will for this office. Not long before he died he had a very happy day. The fanatic had hunted through the daily papers for a good item for him, and had unearthed a brilliant description of a British victory. Now, his father had been an officer in the British army.

"Good fortune was pleased at times to remember the Second Lieutenant, and a fervent young lady happened to drop in to see the Sisters at St. Rose's Free Home. With a tremor the fanatic asked her if she had half an hour to give to reading to the male patient in the annex. Her delight at being of so much use was beautiful to see. She read for an hour, the janitor's wife and her children running in and out to keep her company. It was an ordeal, for the patient was growing extremely deaf, and the reader was obliged to sit quite close to his ear. But his interest was so immense that the young lady could not bear to stop reading all the British news, and all the other news. The old soldier died happier for that interim of early memories recalled, and harmless pride revived.

"Another great pleasure greeted him as he took his stately way out of this world. Dr. Horatio R. Storer, and his wife and daughter (of Newport, R. I.), came to see St. Rose's Home, and to pass their opinion upon

its humble methods. The directress was not a little urgent that all visitors should examine the annex for male cases, because it was so pitifully small that the hardest heart would be likely to melt at sight of a very sick old man of refinement, in a tenement so unattractive and noisy, so unfit, and yet so much better than nothing. After taking the keen-eyed physician into every cranny of the Home, she insisted upon conducting him across the street and was prepared to ask him, if he objected to the precinct she had prepared, to win something better for her purpose from a public that would believe his testimony as to a great need.

"So the directress led the way through the howling, clattering children who filled the street with din, safely piloting her guests before the onslaught of drays frantically driven, and up a flight of entrance-steps loaded with dirty babies and little nurse maids hardly older than the infants. Then progress had to be made through a perfectly dark narrow entry, long and forbidding. The door opened, on the ground floor, into the errand man's parlor, so it might be called, which held his cot-bed as an imposing lounge, being daily covered with a bit of drapery, and the room having in it two little windows which admitted sunlight. Next to this was the patient's room, somewhat larger, also lighted by two sunny windows, and ornamented as cheerfully as the Servants dared to allow, while keeping strictly to the inexpensiveness appropriate to their work. A perfect peace dwelt in the little room. The dying man was not only resigned to the great change approaching him, but was resigned to its coming with agonizing delays, like slow torturings by most depraved

savages. He did not revolt against God's hand thus disguised. Of such stuff are the men made who shoot above a fatal adversary's head in a duel they have not sought. His eyes still looked up and shot forth light as the directress entered; she who had given him the best she had with the determination of a small but faithful fox-terrier. She had feared that her guests might not see in a brief interview how nice a gentleman her dying patient was. But how foolishly she had estimated the insight of an eminent physician! The doctor and the soldier were friends at once. The doctor's daughter found out in a twinkling that a military medal was upon the old man's breast which was his guarantee of honor.

" 'He says it is to be yours!' she exclaimed softly, turning to the fanatic.

"The doctor was practical, in the midst of other traits, and advised the directress to try Bass's ale for the patient.

" 'You'll find there's nothing like it for strengthening your sick who have face cancer,' he said. And so it has proved. It gave the dying creature a last flash of zest and apparent recuperation. Once more he was able to say, loud enough for the Servant to hear it: 'You have been a great blessing to me.'

"He pretended to himself that he could still read his little prayer book, which he grasped; he joined in the prayers at his side with unfading freshness of reverence.

"When he was dead, his only friend, the saloon keeper, officiated as intermediary between the soldier's body and the lodge to which he belonged, but whose members left the arrangements to be made according to the wishes of the Servants of Relief. He was laid in a shed-like room

adjacent to the undertaker's stables. His old uniform, over which he had expended the greatest solicitude, had fought against the inroads of moths manfully, and had only one great prominent hole to mourn and regret as it fulfilled its final mission, and decked him in the hour of his greatest dignity. The directress carried flowers to the shed early in the morning—a wreath and a palm; and she did reverence before the medal, and included the moth-riddled uniform. The shed was on a level with the street, and the door was insecure, and drunken passers could have stumbled in upon the dead. The next world is surely safer and kinder than this one, reflected the weary, often shocked woman.

"He had been courteous and grateful to the last moment, and even when dead remembered the Servants of Relief, it seemed. In the middle of the afternoon some one called the directress, saying:

" 'They are bringing the funeral this way!'

"She went to the window of St. Rose's Home. The hearse was just approaching, slowly, while all the passers stopped quietly in their rush and racking disturbance. The flag draped the coffin, as much as to say: 'He was true to me under fire; and I am his companion now.' The poor tribute of cheap flowers in the noble form of a wreath, the simple palms solemnly speaking of pain religiously borne, seemed to express well the poverty that had helped him in his destitution, as the bloom of a shaded plant gives its starved blossoms to nature, that it may at least be ranked as on duty. This was all the little charity could achieve, but at least it had shared in good works.

"The only friend who never wholly abandoned him, the man who dealt liquors to the poor with questionable Christianity, rode beside the hearse, and lifted his hat to the Servants standing tearfully for a moment in the midst of their hurried labor. So unresistingly and silently the old Second Lieutenant gave his last gracious mark of respect to fraternal help."

X

THE BLESSEDNESS OF FINDING ONE'S WORK

SOME of Mother Alphonsa's reflections on life as they came to her in the midst of her busy days with the poor cancer patients are very interesting. Under the circumstances it is not surprising that they should come from so close to the heart of human nature as to have a very wide appeal. Almost needless to say there must have been many times in her own life as the foundress of the Servants of Relief—especially in the earlier years in the midst of her efforts amounting often to a real struggle with the most trying circumstances to make a success of her young foundation—when there was enough discouragement to make her feel almost despondent in the midst of her work. She realized, however, that only too often the desire for rest or the feeling that we must have it is rather due to mental tiredness than to bodily fatigue, though confusion between the two is rather easy. She was getting supreme satisfaction out of her work but she could not help but think how many others there were around her in New York City from whom even a little help would make the outlook upon life for the poor ever so much better than it was. In April, 1904, in *Christ's Poor,* there is this little article under the title "Reflections of the Conscience," that is extremely interesting for its

bearing upon how much more all of us could do for others, if we only wished, than we actually do accomplish.

"It is beyond words comfortable to sink into an easy chair in a pretty room, with fancy-work close at hand and an amusing book open before us, and no doubt something piquantly sweet in a bonbon box not far off. How the time flies along when we are amusing ourselves with being at ease! We often say we have not time to do the few things which we set out to do; life seems to be melting like frost-forests from a window-pane. Of course, busy folk sometimes wonder at the amount of labor an hour will hold. It is true, our eyes grow heavy when we are only contented; and if people tell us there are spots on the sun which do not belong there, we are ready to believe them, the universe seems to be so ill managed. Just think! While we are lounging, there are women working; not only those who work for their own living, but those who work for the living of others—in the household, in charity, in reform and mental advancements. Some of these active sisters are blessed with youth, ardor and charm, but they are also blessed with generous devotion. Some of them are growing old, are worn with pitiless waves of fatigue, and are wholly unexpectant of reward in this world. But there is a distinction which seems to point to the satisfaction of these mothers, misses, teachers, students, friends—their eyes are clear and steady and bright. The woman who makes an effort is the woman who is refreshing, even if for a moment she stops to catch her breath, with her hand on her hip. When she enters a room and fixes her eyes upon us, splendid, no matter of what color or shape, we wish to know where she found

the elixir which escaped us in our easy chair, and we sniff for it, but without much result, be the air of our boudoir the incense of violets themselves. People of energy are a good deal of a mystery to us lazy ones. I think they may be always waging war with a desire to be selfish, and it is the constant struggle which gives them their fine soldierly presence.

"Nevertheless, our active sisters enjoy the work they undertake; but with a joy which would seem like suffering to the reclining ones. There seems to be a holy touch laid upon the heads of those who try to be useful in however humble a field. The difficult moment of an effort is the first spring; it is like a fairy leap, and so much follows that we marvel at the powerful worlds within the world. We realize that the universe is very much and very well managed, from the sphere of the 'ten righteous men' to the sphere of the planets. Disappointment and unkindness cannot daunt the devoted one who is beginning to live truly, though she may tremble, weep and sink down in secret. She will be up and on before we know it. The awakening of her perceptions which came with a desire to be a servant to the greatest good, shows her what she can never forget—shows her the need for even one more life. She may receive much disciplinary training; but so do the awkward volunteers in the army, whom their country honors and depends upon in her extremity. As for the feeling that we need rest, rest, rest, it is often a fallacious one. It is action which makes muscle. The spirit of life enters into us when we take a vital part in today. Often we suffer from rest. A change of occupation is what we most need, as a rule, and the relief hours of an active

person turn out to be very intelligent. We must rest, but we need not lose our electricity, which the will, the thought, can command at all times, and which ought to be on guard, like an orderly, to summon us when we should become alert. Headaches evaporate if we must exert ourselves for those we love, or we almost forget the pain, which is the same thing; the ill-temper cannot flourish unless we have idleness in which to reflect upon the motes belonging to some one else. With energy leading the way, ennui lifts from the horizon, and we see color and distance again. It seems as if others might labor in comfort and health, instead of sitting down to lassitude and sighs.

"But if one's banner bears a grand motto, it is very true that it will take our life-blood to protect it, in the contest with our meaner desires and the other forces arrayed against the health and energy of the world. Still, our life-blood could not be expended to greater advantage."

How deeply Mother Alphonsa became occupied with her care of her beloved cancer patients will probably be best realized from the fact that when the centenary of her father's birth was celebrated at the old home, The Wayside, Concord, Massachusetts, she could not find the time to write more than a comparatively brief letter of her reminiscences of her father. The Wayside was the only house ever owned by Nathaniel Hawthorne and it passed into the possession of Rose Hawthorne Lathrop and her husband for some years. This letter is interesting for the glimpse that it furnishes of the inner life of the Hawthorne family and so I give it. The letter was

addressed to Mrs. Daniel Lothrop, the wife of the publisher, whose family residence The Wayside became when it passed from the possession of George Parsons Lathrop and his wife. There was every reason why Rose Hawthorne Lathrop should want to make an important contribution to this celebration, but duty was paramount and her cancer poor needed practically all of her time!

"Rosary Hill Home, Hawthorne, N. Y.
"July 5.

"My dear Mrs. Lothrop:

"The reason that I have not sent a paper to be read, about my father's life in Concord as I saw it, is that I am no longer free to use my time if the sick need it as our patients have done for a number of years now. The order to which I belong, which especially combines the active life with prayer, would sanction my going to Concord for so important an occasion; but as yet the women tending the twenty-five cancer cases whom we harbor in the Country Home are too few to allow any of us to fall out of line for a day.

"Your last kind letter, however, gives me the opportunity to express at least a few thoughts, to be added perhaps to the bright and eloquent words aroused upon the hillside which possesses so many memories of great souls now unseen, whose very presence spoke, so that we hardly needed to hear words from their generous lips to know that they have blessed us in their thought.

"You believe that this Wayside echoed with unspoken words as it traversed the homes of Hawthorne, Alcott, Emerson, Channing, Hoar, and others. However noble

and brilliant their speech, their vigor and frankness of insight called forth the uninterrupted response of those who dwelt near them.

"The presence of my father filled my heart; he approached, and every nerve started to position. But he also, though silent, filled my hearing with suggestions of exalted sentiment far more vividly than the printed pages of the princes of literature, ready for their mastery of the imagination in the library, or than the unerring lines and tones of superlative sculpture and painting, recalled in the decorations of our home.

"Since my harsh contact with the roughest side of the world, its anguish of pain and ugly disease, its base cruelties and frightful lapses into evil, I keenly realize the beauty of the rarefied dignity of thought and peacefulness of spirit which made the invisible home of my parents here, of which the outward reality was never permitted to be unworthy in its humble sweetness of aspect, enriched with every distinguished reminiscence and all faultless criterions only, as it stood for them beside the highroad of common things. But though the atmosphere of our home was full of honor and art, and its references were only beautiful and inspiring, and all disgust of every sort was eliminated from fancy and motive, yet my father's personality, containing as it did the analytical knowledge of the world's greatest monstrosities of evil, and wearing, in the latest years, the never-relinquished black of one who had stood beside the bier of human nature—yet this personality was the most tranquil that the Wayside held, the one which, to the end, gave greatest delight of geniality and highest counsel of demeanor. I do not understand

whether it was by the magnetism of genius (that vividness of myriad faculties), or whether it was by the sense brought to me, that my father had mastered a wondrous condensation of perceptions; but I seemed to have a delicious recognition of the results of art at its finest flowering, and the enchanting perfections of godlike character, when we met. There were no regrets; all was joy and strength in these meetings, brief or extended, even after his great mind and heart appeared to have become, as I said, the unforgetting friend of the self-slain race.

" 'Bab,' as he then called me, with a low, cheery note of the voice, breathed deep as he came near. His full, sensitive but nobly strong lips were nearer a smile than a sombre droop; his eyes were chiefly radiance, though often, in those years, full of the long lights of revelation; seldom sparkling with the lesser beauty of frolicsome sympathy as I had seen them shining in England. 'Bab' was silent as the toad under the silent flowers beside the terrace where we sometimes sat together, or as the pine needles on the hill which rustled, but only in a whisper, under his feet, as we walked there in brisker autumn. But his silence kept me busily occupied.

"Dear Mrs. Lothrop, the limit of time is reached for me, and I find that I have said nothing definitely descriptive of my father's life at the Wayside. One thing I will add: The clearest picture in my mind, as I look back to that time between 1860 and 1864, is that of my father and mother stepping side by side about the grounds, looking at a branch here or a vine there. He talked then. Her head was almost always lifted; she was looking straight forward or up at a height of summer loveliness.

He was usually looking down, though not without a ready willingness to follow her command, and also look at some simple grace of the verdure or sublimity of the sky. But he did not forget the grass-blade or the pebble of the mystery of our earthly sojourn.

"Very truly yours,
"M. Alphonsa Lathrop, O.S.D."

The Nurse and Her Mission

Mother Alphonsa's absorption in her work for the cancer poor, so strikingly exemplified by her unwillingness to leave it though only for a day or two for the celebration of her father's centenary, becomes all the more admirable when a definite idea of the nurse's relation to her patients is expressed by one whose experience of hospital life and knowledge of the devoted nurse enables him to tell the story fully.

Virchow, the great medical scientist, whose breadth of mind in scientific research was so extensive that on his death Germany was said to have lost not one but four distinguished scientists because of his attainments in four different departments, was one of the earliest specialists in public health. What he accomplished as director of the sewage farms around Berlin where the workers had better health than the other citizens of the Prussian capital was only equalled by what he did for the great new chain of hospitals in the organization of which the Prussian government turned so confidently to him. In this work he came to appreciate very thoroughly how much nursing, pursued for the sake of the patients rather than for the

wage attached to it, might mean. As a result he has summed up in a very striking way how deep must be the motives which impel attendants on the sick to care for them and above all to continue the fulfillment of that duty year after year and for patient after patient as they succeed each other. Usually the nurse has the satisfaction of having helped in the cure of a large number of patients and their restoration to health and strength, but that of course was denied to Mother Alphonsa and her Sisters in religion, for it was only the incurable that they took, and once patients were admitted, relief from the care of them came only with their passing on to another world than this.

After reading Virchow's paragraphs, appreciation for Mother Alphonsa's work increases and the good that it accomplished can be better understood:[1]

"The hospital attendant must, at least morally and spiritually see in the patient only the helpless and suffering man, his brother and his neighbor; and in order to be able to do this he must have a warm heart, an earnest devotion, and a true sense of duty. There is in reality scarcely any human occupation that brings so immediately with it its own reward, or in which the feeling of personal contentment comes from thorough accomplishment of purpose as that of the nurse.

"But so far as the accomplishment of the task set one

[1] They occur in his volume of essays on *Public Medicine and the History of Epidemics* which is unfortunately not translated into English but will have to be consulted in the original: *Gesammelte Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiete der Oeffentlichen Medicin und der Seuchenlehre* von Rudolf Virchow, Berlin, 1879. August Hirschwald.

is concerned, the attendant in the hospital has ever and anon new demands made upon him and a new task imposed. One patient lies next the other, and when one departs another comes in his place.

"From day to day, from week to week, from year to year, always the same work, over and over again, only forever for new patients. This tires out the hospital attendant. Then the custom of seeing suffering weakens the enthusiasm and lessens the sense of duty. There is need of a special stimulus in order to reawaken the old sympathy. Whence shall this be obtained—from religion or from some temporal reward? In trying to solve this problem we are standing before the most difficult problem of modern hospital management. Before us lie the paths of religious and simple care for the sick. We may say at once that the proper solution has not yet been found.

"It may be easy, from an impartial but one-sided view of the subject, to say that the feeling of duty, of devotion, even of sacrifice, is by no means necessarily dependent on the hope of religious reward, nor the expectation of material remuneration. Such a point of view, however, I may say at once, such a freedom of good will, such a warmth of sympathy from purely human motives as would be expected in these conditions, are only to be found in very unaccustomed goodness of disposition, or an extent of ethical education such as cannot be found in most of those who give themselves at the present time to the services of the sick in the hospitals. If pure humanity is to be a motive, then other circles of society must be induced to take part in the care of the sick. Our training schools

for nurses must teach very differently to what they do at present, if the care of the sick in municipal hospitals shall compare favorably with that given them in religious institutions. Our hospitals must become transformed into true humanitarian institutions."

XI

MOTHER ALPHONSA'S GRATITUDE TO THE FRIENDS OF HER WORK

Mother Alphonsa's appreciation for whatever was done for her was so whole-hearted and expansive that a benefactor was sure to think that he was receiving far more in return than he had given. Whatever it was, it seemed small in comparison with her thankfulness. Her gratitude for little things done for her was so impressive as to make those of us who were interested wish that we could do more and more. In the early part of the new century there came the question of the organization of an auxiliary which would be constantly helpful in supplying the daily smaller needs of the institution, leaving its building program and ambitions to be cared for by those who could give in larger amounts. Members of the auxiliary who came in personal contact with Mother Alphonsa were stimulated to help her good work to the fullest limit of their means. The gratitude which they received in return always seemed exaggerated and yet it was just the expression of the overflowing goodness of Mother's heart.

As an illustration of this we fortunately have from her pen the account of a little function which a number of friends of her charity attended at her invitation at Rosary Hill Home. From it she derived a great deal of en-

couragement in her good work and she had the feeling that now the organization of her friends would be sure to lift many of the smaller but continuous burdens that weighed her down in the midst of her devoted service to her cancer patients. Whatever there is touching about the description of the function is due to Mother's own feelings that were bubbling over in her heart and to her Hawthorne power of expression which so delightfully enhanced the value of the little sacrifices that were being made for her and her patients. In the number of *Christ's Poor* for June, 1904, she tells the story of the organization of the auxiliary that proved to be helpful for many years afterwards. It is very evident that she herself thoroughly enjoyed this occasion which brought back to her something at least of her old life among her literary friends in New York and satisfied some of the æsthetic aspirations of her soul which must often have seemed almost to be stifled in the midst of the deterrent work, so far as human nature was concerned, among her cancer poor:

"Mother Alphonsa's first intention had been to cheer the monotonous life of the patients, of whom some were of refined calibre (not forgetting the hard-worked Sisters), with at least one lecture from Dr. Walsh, who had long before offered to help the charity in any way possible. In fact, the munificent *largesse* of Dr. Walsh's offer included the offer of a 'benefit' lecture in New York. 'You have my sincerest sympathy,' he says, 'in your work, and I feel that it will stand as a mission well worthy of the best sympathies of the best people.'

"It was but a single motion of the wings of thought,

therefore, to bring our idea of a thanksgiving celebration to the scheme of securing Dr. Walsh's aid for the 18th of May (Feast of the Apparition of St. Michael, whose glorious name is added to that of the Most Holy Rosary in the dedicatory name of the chapel); and though the patients would not be able to hear the lecture on such an occasion, the entertainment for patrons who would be present would be of the best and noblest. Count on Dr. Walsh, and win! No negative came back from him. 'I should like indeed to be out there to see your trees in bloom, and I hope that some of my friends will find the time to go on the 18th. I do not know, however, how many may care to take the day off from what is always the busy whirl of New Yorkers on the go, and never getting anywhere. We shall see. With best wishes for your success, and for the special success of this little scheme of ours, I am

'Yours very respectfully,

'Jas. J. Walsh.

'P.S. Really, you must not magnify the little good I may do, for it is mainly due to an Irish gift of the gab, and a consequent liking for talking.

'J. J. W.'

"And soon the company had arrived, and, St. Anthony's aid having been invoked for a fair day, the lecture about St. Francis of Assisi was given in the open air, the guests sitting in and around the new women's summer house, which commanded Assisi views. Still the echoes of that lecture come back to Rosary Hill Home, as if the hills were speaking of it. 'Magnificent,' ' great,' 'charming,'

are words used, among many others, to praise it, in cordial letters of congratulation and thanks.

"Very, very grateful are the sick and well of the home to Dr. Walsh; but all are determined to have the patients and Sisters present the next time he speaks in their neighborhood, even if it can be, on this account, only a family gathering.

"His Grace, the Most Reverend Archbishop, wrote that if it were at all possible he would be present. To the great regret of all, our beneficent Archbishop could not come. The Director of the community and charity was absent upon a mission in Brooklyn, but prayed that every good would result from the humble celebration, and congratulated the Sisters 'upon having secured so able a speaker.' Father E. A. Wilson, O.P., spiritual director of the Eucharistic League, represented St. Vincent Ferrer's Convent, and was most joyously welcomed by a poor charity which he has always treated with much graciousness. The Rev. Timothy A. Hickey was one of the impersonated sunbeams who saved the day from April showers. He spoke most admirably in introducing the lecturer to the assembled guests, some of whom were strangers to intimate Catholic affairs, being Protestant neighbors of the Home; and therefore the 'introducing' of Dr. Walsh to his ardent admirers, of long-standing respect and devotion, was not absolutely unnecessary. Father Hickey did not merely perform this act of courtesy, but very eloquently and penetratingly referred to the service of the poor, and of the times of Apostolic preparation for carrying on the principles of Christ, pursued in the open, mountainous atmospheres selected by our Lord for His discourses; and

of the simple, breeze-cleared spaces through which St. Francis preferred to walk while meditating.

"It had been expected that the company would (except the clergy, to be served in the guest parlor) pass the lunch hour under the trees in the garden and upon the hillside. Little benches had been put up here and there, and the wild flowers were ready. But it was too damp and cool for that; whereas the summer house was carpeted with a thick layer of marble chips, and was not too damp for the lecture-audience. Much informality culminated in a downright picnic upon the glazed corridors running the full length of the house, and the priests' table, if it did not have the melodious attentions of orchestral music, at any rate heard a fine chorus of laughing talk at the edge of its own repartee. The Very Rev. Alexander Mercier, O.P., Prior of St. Michael's Monastery, Sherman Park, was the guest of honor, surrounded by a bevy of distinguished clergy and laity. The Rev. Patrick Smyth, O.P., Chaplain of Manhattan College, but belonging to Father Mercier's Community, and Confessor to all the inmates of Rosary Hill Home, where he also kindly gives instructions and sermons very often, with an eloquence of the most genuine sort; Father Stephen Jones, O.P., another member of the same community, whose charming and helpful work as missionary and preacher of Retreats calls him constantly to the city and elsewhere, to give spiritual assistance; Father Damien, O.P., another member, and rector of the Church of Valhalla, close by, who is never free from the labors demanded of him because of his energy and eloquence; Father Alexis Casterot, O.P., still another member, stationed at Pleasantville, the neighbor-

ing village, as rector of the Church of the Holy Innocents, which he has made a gem of devotional loveliness, and who often aids the Sisters in spiritual matters, both in storm and sunshine; Father Marinaro, pastor of the Italian Church of our Lady of Mount Carmel in White Plains, which the zealous priest is cheerfully completing with difficulty, appropriate to his youth and great physical strength; the pale, intent Father T. A. Hickey, whose zeal for souls may be literally called 'at a white heat,' and whose skill in bringing light to Protestant or infidel minds is already famous in his youth; these noble priests were joined by F. Harper, Esq., of Brooklyn, one of the greatest benefactors of the charity; J. Warren Greene, Esq., of New York, the legal adviser and munificent patron of the work, though a Protestant (the work has many Protestant supporters), and Dr. Walsh himself, who was wanted 'everywhere' among the company, and managed to be there with astonishing skill. He had called upon the coöperation of his Dante class, and although the very threatening weather of the early morning had kept many persons away, out of the three hundred and fifty invited, his net caught some of his own especial scholars. Mrs. Arnold, famous in the hearts of those who love the poor, and the concerted Catholic labor for them which is exemplified in St. Rose's Settlement, 257 East Seventy-first Street, and in the establishing of the Church of St. Catherine of Siena in East Sixty-fifth Street, which were both made possible by Mrs. Arnold's wealth and personal application of care and tenderness; Miss Sadlier, of the renowned family long dear to every Catholic; Miss Ford, of the family of the editor of *The Freeman's Journal;*

Miss Maria A. Becket, the artist, whose genius is superlative in landscape, and whose brother is a refined and popular author; Mrs. Warren E. Mosher, the wife of the editor of *The Champlain Educator,* a radiant vision of health and happiness, delightfully recalling with Mother Alphonsa the first days of the Summer School in New London, where so much was hoped for, and is now fulfilled; all these, and others, came. But this account must have its limit; the theme of the fête is a pleasant one for the Servants of Relief to dwell upon! Mr. Harper wrote back: 'It was a glorious success,' and Father Hickey wrote: 'It was a grand success, and the lecture was simply great.' Let these glowing and treasured messages indicate the shining aspect of many other written expressions.

"Mrs. Mosher's earnest piece of advice, 'Let there be a series of these gatherings!' will not be disregarded.

"We owe especial thanks, which we frequently give, to the Sisters of St. Hyacinth's Convent and School (Dominican) who brought the little boys with them to sing at Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. The boys (and a few little maids) behaved with the greatest gentleness and loveliness, which is mentioned with suppressed merriment, because their guardian Sister was afraid to give them a moment before time, lest they should ride a sheep or turn somersaults down the terrace. They never did such things before (only the robins know whether they did anything else in cherry time), and they were models of perfect gentlemanliness, and the girls imitated their placidity. All sang charmingly at Benediction, joined by the deep voices of the priests.

"Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament was given

by Very Rev. Father Mercier at four o'clock, the chapel scarcely holding the band of worshippers, and sunlight and beautiful white dogwood, in spreading branches, lighting up all the five altars among the golden glow of candle-flame."

This lively sense of gratitude so characteristic of Mother Alphonsa in the early days of her foundation clung to her all during life, as may be seen from the letters which she continued to write until the end of her life in response to even small contributions to her work. Fortunately we have one of the last of these letters written when she was beginning to feel very poignantly the advance of the years and yet felt the obligation of personal response to those who were kind to her. This is a letter written to a good priest, bedridden from paralysis for many years, who could ill afford, out of his little store, to make a contribution to the charity. Its appeal to him was, however, so strong that he sent three dollars for the fund for the erection of Mother Alphonsa's fireproof home. In his helpless condition he realized even more than others might what a dreadful catastrophe fire might prove if it once gained any headway in the quarters of her bedfast patients. Mother Alphonsa had to delay the answer for a good while for she was very much preoccupied, but it eventually reached her modest benefactor and with it went some words that must have helped to lift up his heart. I happen to know that he kept the letter near him and used to read it over and over again and that nothing so served to lift depression when it came to him as Mother Alphonsa's words.

This letter is all the more notable because in it, as if to

make her good friend the contributor more contented with his own lot, there is an open confession of Mother Alphonsa's personal feelings such as is to be found nowhere else, a revelation of a sense of exhaustion owing to the years that few of her friends were aware of, for she kept her troubles to herself and shared only her joys with others. After all, she was nearly seventy-five and could not help but feel that the end of life was drawing near, so she tried to be as helpful as possible to this kindly contributor so much in need of sympathy.

"January 17, 1926.

"Reverend dear Father Kelly,—

"I am not rude—I am sickly with old age and overwork—and my letters toddle along very slowly to my dear friends. I was so glad to have your letter just before Christmas and your kind help of $3.00, put into our fund for building a safe home here as the house we are living in is frail and of wood. I will so gladly send you word when our fireproof home is finished as we hope—next June. What a noble trial you have, in being paralyzed! May God be with you and every day a good long lap towards the highest heaven!

"I am seventy-five next May and as my friends say 'worked out,' and then the Grippe and Flus and acute sicknesses weakened my heart so that I have to give up very active work. We had a very fine Christmas, and that is why I did not put your valued gift into food and flowers, presents and little 'tips' to each of our more than fifty patients. I never had so much given us for Christmas itself before. The patients said that they had

never enjoyed so happy a Christmas. Many think that they are a very unhappy set of people, but God manages that very differently once people understand that they should be treated as representatives of our Lord. May your new year be very full of real joy and please write again!

"Most gratefully yours,
"Mother M. Alphonsa, O.S.D."

XII

AS OTHERS SAW THEM

Not long after Mrs. Lathrop's little group of helpers for the care of the cancer poor had been transformed into the Sister Servants of Relief of the Third Order of St. Dominic, her work began to attract notice and especially from those whose attention proved encouraging and helpful. Many of the literary friends whom she had known during her years in New York welcomed news of her work. *Christ's Poor* [1] contains a letter from Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) in answer to a communication from Mother Alphonsa asking for a contribution for her little magazine. In this the great American humorist, who out of the depth of some sad experiences of his own could so well sympathize with suffering, expresses his appreciation for the beneficent charity she was doing for a group in the population who above all deserved sympathy and help.

Mrs. Lathrop's work attracted his attention almost from its earliest beginning and he had been generous in contributions to her home, his contributions sometimes reaching her at times of great need. Now he was rejoiced to hear that she was overcoming the inevitable difficulties of the earlier days of her work, and that it was enlarging

[1] December, 1901.

its capacity for taking care of the cancer poor so that it could accommodate many more and could still more amply fulfill the charitable desires of its founder. His letter is the best evidence of his recognition of Mother Alphonsa's loving attention to her poor patients and his appreciation of its practical accomplishment. He had known her in the literary circles of New York before she devoted herself to her mission for the sufferers from cancer and he addresses her by the name under which he first knew her, though he shows in the course of the letter that he is quite aware of the foundation of the religious community which she had established. Manifestly he feels that this definite effort to secure continuity of the work if anything should happen to her, is a very wise provision:

"Riverside, New York City.
"Oct. 19, 1901.

"Dear Mrs. Lathrop:

"I wish I were not so hard-driven; then nothing could give me more contentment than to try to write something worth printing in your periodical, 'Christ's Poor'; indeed you pay me a compliment which I highly value when you invite me to do it, as holding me not unworthy to appear in its pages. But if I cannot write I can at least try to help in other ways, and I shall do that, for among the needs of your noble charity is money, and I know some people who have it and who have not been reluctant to spend it in good causes. And certainly if there is an unassailably good cause in the world it is this one undertaken by the Dominican Sisters, of housing, nourishing and nursing the most pathetically unfortunate of all the

afflicted among us—men and women sentenced to a painful and lingering death by incurable disease.

"I have known about this lofty work of yours since long ago—indeed from the day you began it; I have known of its steady growth and progress step by step to its present generous development and assured position among those benefactions to which the reverent homage of all creeds and colors is due; I have seen it rise from seedling to tree with no endowment but the voluntary aid which your patient labor and faith have drawn from the purses of grateful and compassionate men; and I am glad in the prosperous issue of your work, and glad to know that this prosperity will continue, and be permanent—a thing which I do know, for that endowment is banked where it cannot fail until pity fails in the hearts of men. And that will never be.

"Sincerely yours,

"S. L. Clemens."

When one is dealing with destitute patients who are not received until they have been pronounced as sufferers from incurable cancer, the question of their burial must always come up for due consideration. Mother Alphonsa had not been long established in her work of Rosary Hill before arrangements had to be made for burial places for her patients. Fortunately the Sisters were able to secure a plot in a cemetery not far away which appropriately enough bore the title "The Gate of Heaven." As a symbol of her appreciation of the good work and a central decoration for the plot in which the patients of the

home would lie, after the bitter ailment was over, Mrs. Mary Longfellow Milmore, the daughter of Longfellow, the poet, and the wife of Milmore, the sculptor, asked that she should be allowed to donate a granite cross in memory of her husband. This has made the plot one of the points of interest of the cemetery.

Somehow death did not seem such a departure from all that they had been accustomed to here when the thought came to the patients of the little graveyard not so far away for their last resting-place. Some of the trees that they could see from the porch of the home would cover them in the summer time and there was a homeliness about the circumstances that made for definite consolation for the poor sufferers who knew that death was so near. In the older Catholic times the graveyard was always the churchyard and every family visit to the church meant one also to the grave of departed friends. New Englanders in the farming districts were accustomed to having their family grave plots in one corner of the farm and death never seemed a distant, far-away event. Something of this was true for the cancer patients who looked out over their valley to the graves on the opposite hill. It might have been different if death did not come to all; but it not only comes but has a way of coming in its own time stealthily "like a thief in the night," even to those who do not dream that it is anywhere near. Mother Alphonsa used to say that their little plot in the graveyard completed their home for the cancer patients. Its nearness was a blessing and not in any sense of the word a source of dread. Blessed are those who face death calmly

and await its coming with confidence that somehow all will be well though life has been dreary enough in its terminal stages.

Patients who came to Mother Alphonsa were, as we have said, practically always in the last stages of cancer and most of them looked forward to death within a few months. Many of them were so poor that after dying in the home there was no one to bury them, and Mother Alphonsa had to take upon herself the task of providing not only for their funeral expenses but also for their grave in the cemetery. This was one of the earliest problems that came up in her work. Among some of the patients who were referred to her within the first year of her devotion to the cancer poor, a few were already so far advanced in the disease that it would have been extremely inadvisable to try to move them from their quarters no matter how unsuitable those might be. Sudden and fatal hemorrhages are not unusual in the terminal stage of cancer because of the invasion of blood vessels by the new growth. Aid was provided for these in their homes and a good deal of consolation was thus afforded them. Some of these patients were bitterly disappointed at not having the privilege of dying under the immediate care of the good Sisters for they felt that their nearness to them would be a source of strength in their ultimate trial. Some of these pleaded at least for the privilege of being buried from the little chapel of the cancer home in New York. One of these patients was particularly touching, for the poor sufferer was very insistent on the fulfillment of Mother's promise that her funeral should be from their chapel. The thought of this post-mortem privilege proved

a great consolation to the sufferer even amid the severe pains of the ultimate stage of her disease.

Human nature finds relief from what might seem almost unbearable pain through the satisfaction of feelings that appear utterly inadequate to lessening physical suffering. This necessity of providing for the burial and the funeral services of her patients represented an extension of her charity that was at first unlooked for. The incurable cancer poor had been referred to the almshouse hospital and from there if unclaimed had been buried in Potter's Field or their bodies had been distributed to the dissecting rooms throughout the city. Mother Alphonsa hesitated over assuming this new burden, not for any lack of sympathy with the needs that were represented, but because she feared that this might absorb some of the resources that were so much needed for the care of poor suffering humanity during life. Her decision that this was just another phase of her work which had to be fulfilled was inevitable and is the subject of a very interesting paragraph in *Christ's Poor,*[2] that is characteristic of the spirit of Mother Alphonsa:

"But the Sisters had sent her (the dying patient) word that in any case she should be buried from our chapel, with the decent care we felt was right in the last duty towards our sick. It was with a pang of fear lest she were going too far, that the Superioress made this promise. She stood still on her way to the little monastery of the Missionary Fathers, as she carried the message to be sent (when the priest took her the Most Blessed Sacrament for Viaticum) while the snow fell about her among the trees of the hillside road, to try to understand what God

[2] September, 1902.

would wish for this poor woman and her heart's desire. Why should she, of all the world, be denied this consolation? Contempt and criticism must be faced by the stronger woman of the two, said the Superioress to herself. The word once given, a conviction of God's approval shone forth; and when the coffin stood among the other poor in the chapel, to whom she owed her Christian burial, it seemed as if our patrons would be glad to know of such a gentle act toward a cancer patient, who had longed to be of our number in the Home. Our own poor tearfully welcomed the sacred body, the temple of the Holy Ghost, thankful that they could pray around it, and rescue it from ignominious neglect, when she could no longer eloquently plead for herself.

"What the Sisters had seen in all this, led them to desire for the dead of almshouses, a more fitting attention, and for Catholic dead, a consecrated burying-ground; a more Christian introduction, moreover, to the life beyond this world. Do not let us turn from these temples of the almshouse, when ours, also, are so little worthy of God's presence."

When some five years had passed over Mother Alphonsa's little community, its spiritual director, Father Thuente, O.P., the good Dominican father to whom the little congregation owed so much, reviewed the progress of the work in congratulating Mother Superior on its success. Only those who were very closely in touch with the community were able to appreciate how fast it was growing into its place in usefulness and efficiency. Better than any one else Father Thuente was in a position to know both the material facts as to the work and the beauty

of the spirit in which it was done. His review constitutes the best summary that we could have of this work during the difficult years of its infancy which are so likely to try the spirit of the founder as well as that of the early members of these new congregations:

"February 10, 1904.

"Dear Mother Alphonsa:

"Let me tell you how much I was pleased with all I heard and saw during my short visit at Rosary Hill Home. Your good work has certainly progressed wonderfully. A few years ago when I met you for the first time, you occupied a little flat in a dilapidated frame building in Water Street. Now you have a solid brick house in Cherry Street, and have turned the nice, newly restored and beautifully located Dominican convent of Sherman Park into a Home for Christ's Poor. Instead of caring for four or five of God's most neglected and most afflicted children, you now accommodate and make happy about thirty-five incurable cancer patients. Your little band of faithful helpers, once consisting of three, has now developed to a community of sixteen. Such progress in your difficult and heroic work is certainly consoling, and an evident sign that God's helping and protecting Hand is with you.

"I was glad to see that the Sisters are not satisfied with superintending the work, but that they care for the sick and dress their wounds personally.

"Paid help can never equal the work which is inspired by true religious charity. Your poor inmates need more than a home, food and medicine. They need sympathy

and compassion. This they receive in abundance, by seeing every day the cheerful faces, hearing the sympathetic voices, and feeling the kind and charitable hands of the Sisters who administer to all their wants.

"Human sympathy means much to the hearts of your helpless sufferers. However, they need and look for more than this. Religion with its supernatural strength, and eternal hope, is of the greatest importance for them. They all resemble in many respects poor Job of old, dressed in rags, covered with ulcers, neglected by his own, pitied by the very dogs. What a tender, noble heart and holy, patient soul was there, under those rags and ulcers. In all his sufferings, Job turned his eyes to heaven, and kept them fixed on God. He understood well that all his afflictions came from God, for some good and supernatural end; that God alone could give him the strength to bear them; that God some day would reward him. 'All the days,' he says, 'in which I am now in warfare, I expect until my change shall come. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth. In my flesh I shall see my God. This my hope is laid up in my bosom.' Not all the sick have this beautiful faith, and consoling hope of the glorious resurrection and everlasting happiness. It is a great blessing for them to have the care of the religious who serve them and who come to them from the chapel, and return from them to the chapel; thus acting as mediators between them and God, bringing divine comforts to them, and presenting their petitions to God.

"To have thus sweetened the last hours of over two hundred patients, and sent their souls, well prepared, into

the next world, where they will shine eternally in the light of God, is a great work.

"In the name of the sick we thank you and your fellow Sisters, who perform such difficult and disagreeable work; we thank God Who gives you the grace to perform it; and we thank your many generous benefactors who have so nobly helped you to continue and to develop it.

"Fraternally yours,

"Clement M. Thuente, O.P."

Her ecclesiastical superiors and especially the successive archbishops of New York gave Mother Alphonsa every encouragement. They appreciated very thoroughly how much of self-sacrifice was involved in the work and how characteristic it was of the spirit of Christianity in its care for hopeless and helpless poor. They realized that the work was not only a form of charity but that it was also a marvelous example to a world mainly occupied with selfish thoughts and so likely to be forgetful of those who were so deeply in need in the midst of a great city's prosperity. Above all, Mother Alphonsa came to realize something of the appreciation and reverence for her work which was to be found in the hearts of the Sisters of other religious communities which made her and her suffering patients the subject of many prayers and the object of many good works.

XIII

THE SHORT AND SIMPLE ANNALS OF THE POOR
MOTHER ROSE'S DIARY

THE old monasteries from the earliest mediæval times were careful to keep chronicles even in the days when there was no paper and when parchment was rare and expensive, for the monks felt that it was worth their while to keep these records, simple as they were, for the benefit and the edification of succeeding generations. A similar feeling has fortunately preserved for us the annals of the Servants of Relief for Incurable Cancer. A community diary was kept by Mother Rose who was the first to join Mother Alphonsa in her beneficent work and who was always very close to her for the next thirty years. This diary contains the story of the foundation, especially in the early days of struggle when it was so hard to get along, but follows it up to the recent years when the beneficence of the public made possible such growth as enabled hundreds of patients to be cared for rather than the scant half-dozen of the first few years.

Mother Rose is still alive as the head of the community and she has been kind enough to select those passages from the house diary which constitute "the short and simple annals of the poor" during the earlier difficult years as well as during the later years, when Mother Alphonsa's heart was so full because she was easing the progress to-

ward inevitable painful death of so many fellow mortals. The diary tells the story of Mother Alphonsa's own death in the simple straightforward fashion that surely would most have pleased the Mother herself in her desire for utter simplicity in all that concerned her personal connection with the work.

These diary excerpts would remind the student of historical documents, of the chronicles of the monasteries, because they refer in passing to the great events which took place outside of the walls though only in such a fashion as to date the details of convent life. It is easy to understand what a valuable confirmation for other historical documents such a chronicle would be, but it is also easy to appreciate how historians would wish that the monastic chronicler had only given more details of the outside events and spent less time over community matters.

The diary constitutes a very valuable illustration for historical materials connected with monastic chronicles, because it shows just how these came to be what they are. It was not because the monks were not interested in the larger events that they failed to give ampler details of them, but that their business was to tell the current story of the monasteries. We have in this diary a typical monastic chronicle, and the surprise is that it should have been written in the twentieth century. Undoubtedly the spirit of Mother Alphonsa hovered over its writer and so we have in the simple convent chronicle a piece of literature that has significance in itself as a mirror of convent life as well as a means of providing the material for history.

The writer tells the story of the gradual transformation

of the little group of women who gathered together for the nursing of the destitute cancer cases into a religious congregation affiliated with the Third Order of St. Dominic. This gave it a definite status and secured its perpetuation for the work as long as that might continue to be necessary. As a religious congregation there was a permanency and an assurance of support in old age for the members who devoted their youth to the work such as would come in no other way.

"Friends who remained faithful until claimed by death came to Water Street and urged Mrs. Lathrop to endeavor to secure a house in the neighborhood. 426 Cherry Street was for sale, a small, but comfortable dwelling (indeed it seemed palatial in comparison to the four miserable rooms on Water Street). Mrs. Lathrop made an appeal for the necessary funds and responses came from all parts of the country. Four friends of the work contributed $1,000 each—Mr. J. Warren Greene, Mr. Theodore B. Starr, Mr. John D. Crimmins and Mrs. Frances A. Moulton—and in a comparatively short time the building was secured, and we left Water Street on May 1st, 1899. At that time we wore a semi-religious dress; Archbishop Corrigan at first refused permission for this dress, but on second appeal granted it, but advised us to consider attaching ourselves to some existing religious Order. We were called the Servants of Relief for Incurable Cancer. After a time we decided to give 426 Cherry Street a name, and called it St. Rose's Free Home for Incurable Cancer; it was named not after Mrs. Lathrop, but the first American saint, Rose of Lima (Peru). The new Home filled up immediately with

patients, and we were kept almost continually occupied. In the early part of August Rev. Clement M. Thuente, O.P. came to the Home and advised us to call on Archbishop Corrigan and obtain permission to join the Third Order of St. Dominic. On August 21st, 1899, His Grace granted us an interview and listened patiently to our plans, but refused to give a definite answer until the matter had been placed before his Council. Two weeks later we received a letter from the Archbishop, permitting us to become Dominican tertiaries living in Community, but refusing us permission to wear the Habit of the Dominican Order.

"Father Thuente received us on the morning of September 14th, 1899—Mrs. Lathrop became Sister Mary Alphonsa, and I, Sister Mary Rose. After becoming Tertiaries we began living a more religious life, said the Office and had daily Meditation. We had a little Chapel with permission for Mass once a week. Rev. James T. McEntyre, Rector of St. Teresa's, was sent by the Archbishop to inspect the altar and to see that all was in a proper condition for the celebration of the Mass, which was offered up for the first time on Christmas Day, 1899, by Father Joseph, one of the Capuchin Fathers from Pitt Street.

"The year of 1900 came in very cold; some of the patients were attacked with a bad form of Grippe; Mother Alphonsa contracted the malady, and for several days was very sick, her room had no place for a fire and was frightfully cold. It was some time before she could come downstairs and a long time before she fully recovered her usual health. In the summer of 1900 several calls came for

male patients; there was no place in the Cherry Street Home for a male department, so Mother rented a few rooms across the street and put a man in charge; the cases she received were so forlorn that she could not turn them away. In the latter part of the summer several applicants were received, we welcomed them with great joy, for His Grace said that when the Community grew to six the Blessed Sacrament would be reserved in our Tabernacle. We wrote to tell His Grace that we had the required number, he answered immediately with the necessary permission, and on October 4th, 1900, the Blessed Sacrament was placed in the Tabernacle of our plain little Altar. Shortly afterwards Archbishop Corrigan sent for Father Thuente and told him to give the Dominican Habit to Mother Alphonsa and myself; he afterwards sent a letter to Father Thuente confirming his permission for the reception of the Habit and for our first vows. Shortly afterwards we called on the Archbishop, he received us very kindly, said we had had a long and hard novitiate, and that he was much pleased to grant the necessary permission for the religious Habit. On the 8th day of December, 1900, Mother and I received the Habit and made our first vows, and were called the Dominican Congregation of St. Rose of Lima; Father Thuente officiated and preached the sermon, which was followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The only witnesses were a few postulants, and immediately after the ceremony we resumed our usual work.

"On January 24, 1901, we received the certificate of incorporation as the Servants of Relief for Incurable Cancer.

"At that time we were living so crowded that we either had to extend the work or stop growing. Owing to the nature of the disease we could find no place in the immediate neighborhood, the tenants across the street were unwilling for us to continue the male department there, so we had to consider the situation very seriously. We made a novena in honor of the Sacred Heart for guidance, and at its close Father Cothenay, a member of the French Dominicans at Sherman Park, called to say that they were obliged to sell their place and offered same to us on reasonable terms. Mother and I went up to see the place before making a decision and found it beautifully situated, but in a very dilapidated condition. The fine situation and nearness to New York seemed suited to our work. St. Rose's then was completely out of debt and a legacy of $10,000 had just been left the work, so we concluded to buy the place, paying a certain sum in cash with a mortgage for the balance; permission for the purchase had to be secured from the Archbishop, who willingly gave consent. The place was in a neglected condition, in fact it was a mere shell, and we had to use all the money we had to make it habitable; we had not sufficient, and soon heavy debts accumulated.

"On June 1, 1907, Mother Alphonsa with a few postulants left St. Rose's. I went with them to the station to say goodbye and when I returned and found her empty chair, I felt the pangs of intense loneliness. Some patients were transferred from St. Rose's on June 5th and on the following day (which happened that year to be Corpus Christi) the House was formally opened with a High Mass sung by Father Conrad, a Capuchin Father

from Pitt Street. The following week more patients were transferred, and in a short time we had quite a little crowd. There were so many alterations to be made that our money dwindled down until we had almost nothing (in fact, Mother hadn't any, I had $20.00 and gave her $10.00). However, a good friend came to our rescue and sent us $2,000.00, and we paid our most pressing bills and tried to make the place more habitable. In the early part of the Winter we received one-half of the legacy left us by Mrs. Williams; we paid $3,000 on the mortgage and the remainder was used for general expenses. The Winter was very cold, and we found it difficult to keep the house sufficiently warm for comfort. However, the Winter passed and in the early Spring several postulants came. In April, a few weeks before his lamented death, Archbishop Corrigan sent us a copy of the Dominican Rule by Fr. Logan, then Prior of St. Vincent Ferrer's, with instructions to follow it as much as was consistent with our work, which we did.

"When Summer came, Mother had the grounds about the house put in proper order, planted fruit trees and laid out flower beds; she also put up double windows on the front of the house thinking it would be warmer in Winter, when the wind blew fiercely into every crack. On July 16th Father Logan officiated at the clothing of six postulants. Owing to the many necessary repairs the Autumn of 1902 found us very poor, the Winter was arriving, there was little coal in the cellar and no trusty man about the place. On the 8th of December Mother came to St. Rose's to renew her vows with myself, and her hands were rough from hard work; it was an intensely cold day,

but she returned to Rosary Hill after the ceremony as everything was depending upon the Sisters. To make matters worse the pipes throughout the house were frozen, and the Sisters had to get heaps of snow and melt it for the cooking. 1902 and 1903 were our hardest years.

"Shortly after New Year's of 1903 Mother had a very serious spell of sickness; for several days she was in a critical condition and we were very anxious about her. It was several weeks before she fully recovered her health, but not peace of mind. The weather was frightfully cold and we were extremely low in funds. Our appeals in the papers met with few responses and our appeals to friends, with few exceptions, remained unanswered. The Winter passed and in the Spring we received a legacy of $5,000 from Miss Elizabeth Harper, and had sufficient for our daily needs. On July 16th Father Logan again officiated at the ceremony of Clothing and Profession. In the autumn of 1903 Rev. Clement M. Thuente was elected Prior of St. Vincent Ferrer's to succeed Father Logan; he called to see us on November 15th and promised to renew his active interest in our work. On that same day we had a visit from Father Fidelis Stone; he had opened a new foundation of the Passionist Order in Scranton, Pa., and in spite of growing old was working hard.

"On July 17th, 1904, four postulants received the Habit and three Novices were professed. Bishop Cusack officiated, and at the close Bishop Cusack made a few remarks, saying he could not refrain from doing so after witnessing so edifying a ceremony; he gave his blessing to the novices and newly-professed and then went through the house and blessed the patients. Supper was served to

the Bishop, the visiting priests and several gentlemen in the new summer house donated by Miss Williams in memory of her brother.

"On December 8th, 1904, Mother Alphonsa and I made our vows for five years. Father Thuente officiated and preached a beautiful sermon—the 8th of December that year was the golden jubilee of the Immaculate Conception. Christmas passed pleasantly, but a few days after a contagious form of grippe broke out at Rosary Hill and a number of patients died.

"March 15, 1905—January was Springlike but later we had a terrible blizzard; the snowdrifts around Rosary Hill were so high that the snow plough was useless and drifts had to be cut through to reach the station. Mother Alphonsa is very busy getting out circulars and tickets for the Lenten lectures to be given by Dr. James J. Walsh.

"March 24, 1905.—The Lenten lectures are proving very successful and Mother is much pleased. In the early Spring we received news of the death of one of our first friends, Father Edward Tuohey; he died rather suddenly in South America.

"On July 17th Archbishop Farley officiated at the ceremony of reception and profession and the sermon was preached by Father Pardow, S.J. A number of prominent clergymen and gentlemen were invited to meet His Grace and Father Pardow; all passed off well, the only drawback being the intense heat, but in spite of the heat and fatigue of the ceremony, the Archbishop gave an audience to the large crowd present and passed through the house blessing the patients.

"March 15, 1906—A lecture for the benefit of the

work was given at Carnegie Hall by Judge Morgan J. O'Brien—$4500 was cleared; it was used for payment on the mortgage.

"May 14th, 1906—Dr. James J. Walsh gave a course of Lenten lectures for our general expenses. The lectures attracted considerable attention and helped very much in our daily needs.

"On the 25th of March, 1906, we were affiliated to the Dominican Order. We received the Diploma of Affiliation through Father Thuente, O.P., on Good Friday, the 13th of April.

"On the 10th of May, 1906, Father Fidelis Stone and Father Edmund Hill paid a visit to Rosary Hill. It proved their farewell visit, for shortly afterwards Father Fidelis went to South America and Father Edmund to England.

"During the year 1906 Mr. George F. Schrader of Hartsdale became interested in the work and caused many improvements (for which he paid) to be made in and about Rosary Hill, the principal of which was a large sun-parlor for the female patients, and a beautiful Amusement Hall where the patients could come for plays, musicals, etc. The Hall was blessed by Rt. Rev. Monsignor McGean of St. Peter's Church, Barclay St., New York City, and after the blessing a troupe of colored minstrels, sent for the occasion by Mr. Schrader, entertained the patients with old plantation songs.

"On February 21st, 1908, Mr. Henry J. Reel, a retired Druggist called to offer his services in our Pharmacy; he came on the 26th to begin his work; his coming is a great blessing to our patients.

"May 11th, 1908—Today Mr. C. F. Cronin called at St. Rose's and gave me a check for $2500.00. It was a wonderful gift coming at a time of great need.

"May 20th, 1908—Yesterday Mr. Cronin went to Rosary Hill Home and gave Mother a check for $5,000.00. This is Mother's 57th birthday and the check of yesterday made it a happy one.

"In the latter part of June, 1908, Archbishop Farley sent for us to say that a Mrs. Eleanor Fearing Strong had left a legacy in his charge to be divided among Homes for incurables; he said we would receive $7,000.00, for our work as soon as the bonds were disposed of. The year 1908 was one of great sorrow to me; I lost my parents and sister, all within seven months.

"On Christmas Day, Mrs. Stephen Cummings, a benefactress, died of cancer.

"1909.

"March 12th—This morning the Salesian Fathers from Columbus College took charge of the spiritual life at Rosary Hill.

"April 15th—We received the legacy of $10,000 left us by Mrs. Stephen Cummings last week and also the share of the Strong legacy donated the work by Archbishop Farley. Mr. Greene paid off the mortgage of Rosary Hill with these two legacies. All is clear now with the exception of $2,000 which we can pay off in a short time.

"May 22nd—On May 16th Most Rev. Archbishop Falconio, the Papal Delegate (to the United States), visited Rosary Hill. He went first to the chapel and then to

the Community Room where he delivered an inspiring address to the Sisters, after which he visited the patients and spent quite a little time with them. He was much pleased with everything and said the work would grow and extend throughout the United States. Mother gave him $27.00 for Peter's Pence for which the male patients had been putting their pennies aside for some time.

"July 27th—Today we paid off the last of the mortgage on Rosary Hill Home. We are very happy and grateful that we are free from debt. The $2,000 we paid today was part of the $5,000 left us by Mr. John G. Heckscher.

"September 16th—The Annual Retreat commenced at Rosary Hill Home September 5th and closed on the morning of the 14th. In the afternoon four postulants received the Habit and one Novice made profession. Rev. Father John Y. McNicholas, O.P., new Archbishop of Cincinnati, officiated and preached the sermon.

"December 8th—Today Mother Alphonsa and myself made our final vows. Father Wilson, O. P. officiated and preached the sermon. It has been a happy day. This same day—nine years ago—Mother and I received the Habit.

"1910.

"April 12th—Today we received word from Msgr. McGean that a member of his parish was anxious to donate 50 beds to St. Rose's Home. The house will only hold 16 beds, so Mother says St. Rose's Home must be made into a larger place and she began planning for the extension of our City Home.

"May 23rd—Today we had a letter from Msgr. McGean in response to Mother's in which she stated St. Rose's on Cherry Street was only a small building and could not accommodate more than 16 patients. This time his letter stated that the family in question would give $25,000 for a new and large building, provided a like amount would be donated.

"Mr. Francis Harper, an old friend of the work, called to see us. He has changed very much since his last visit and looks extremely old, and we felt as we said goodbye to him that it would be the last time on earth.

"July 18th—The weather is intensely hot; people are sleeping on the sidewalks and in the park, and we cannot rest at night.

"We have been low in funds all summer, but Mother has published an appeal in the *Times,* donations are coming in and two small legacies have just been paid, so we will be able to tide matters over.

"August 9th—Mother Alphonsa was in yesterday to look over some places in the neighborhood for the new St. Rose's Home; she went to the corner of Front and Jackson, a place she has always wanted. While she was here a gentleman came and gave her $100.00 for the proposed building.

"September 27th—On the fourteenth four postulants received the Habit. Father Keane, O.P. officiated and Msgr. McGean preached the sermon.

"We received word yesterday that Mr. Francis Harper had passed to his eternal reward.

"October 24th—On the 19th Mother and myself went

to Columbus College (Hawthorne, N. Y.) to meet Cardinal Vanutelli and Archbishop Farley. There were speeches in English and Italian by the boys of the College. The Archbishop was pleased to meet Mother Alphonsa and he brought her to the Cardinal, who gave her a special blessing.

"November 29th. Today Mr. Cornelius F. Cronin called with Mr. Reel to say that he would give the required $25,000 to commence the new St. Rose's. It was a wonderful piece of news and we have the required amount to commence the building—the sum required by the Archbishop to make a start. He placed the question before his Consultors and in a few days we received permission for the building of the new St. Rose's. However, it was not until the Spring of 1911 that we began planning for the building. In March a drive was started to secure the money still needed; it did not meet with the approval of Mother Alphonsa and she stopped the drive and sent out an appeal to the public which met with a generous response. We received $38,000 and some good pledges to be collected when the new building was started. There was some delay in securing a place near the river; there was considerable trouble for a time, but Mother Alphonsa refused to have any if not a desirable location. The Committee yielded to her desire and the property at the corner of Front and Jackson Streets was bought on May 15th, 1911, and paid for in cash—$37,000. At the Archbishop's suggestion, Mr. James W. O'Connor, was the Architect. As soon as the property was secured he drew up the plans which he brought to Rosary Hill for Mother's inspection. She accepted same, and work will

begin as soon as the present tenants who occupy the houses on Front and Jackson Streets, can be gotten out.

"1911.

"On September 14th, Rt. Rev. Monsignor Hayes, Chancellor of the Archdiocese, officiated at the ceremony of Reception and Profession and preached a beautiful sermon. A large crowd was in the chapel and a number of priests in the sanctuary.

"On the 9th of October the old buildings at the corner of Jackson and Front Streets were pulled down and in a few days all was ready to begin excavating. Mother Alphonsa is so happy to know that the work on the new Home has commenced. The work proceeded rapidly and on December 15th the corner stone was laid by Rt. Reverend Monsignor Mooney assisted by Rt. Rev. Monsignor McGean. No invitations were sent out excepting to a few—Mr. Cornelius Cronin, Mr. Edward Smith, Mr. J. Warren Greene, Mr. H. J. Reel and Dr. J. L. Sheils—but a crowd from the neighborhood soon gathered, and I think Mother Alphonsa was pleased to have them there. The day was one like Spring—it seemed wonderful to think that the little Cherry Street House will soon be replaced by a modern fireproof hospital.

"1912.

"In the January of 1912 Father Thuente paid a visit to Rosary Hill and spent several days there. Archbishop, now Cardinal Farley, returned from Rome about the middle of January and was warmly welcomed.

"The Lenten lectures by Dr. Walsh will begin on the 22nd. Mother Alphonsa and two sisters have been busy sending out tickets.

"The new building is going up rapidly. Mother came to see it on March 2nd and was much pleased with the progress of the work and the style of architecture (Spanish), simple and artistic. On the roof, from the Front Street side, there is a view of the Harbor and the statue of Liberty; on the Jackson Street side the Brooklyn Navy Yard and the Park.

"Our building fund is running low and we will have to raise a mortgage.

"The new building was opened to the public on December 15th, 1912, and blessed by Cardinal Farley. People came in crowds, many from a distance, the house was packed, and the streets and Park were jammed. Mother Alphonsa was very happy and extremely active. The Protectory Band met His Eminence at the door; he came at 4 P.M. and immediately began blessing the building, first outside and then inside, ending at the Chapel. Rt. Rev. Monsignor McGean preached the sermon and then the Cardinal spoke and afterwards gave solemn Benediction. After the ceremony we met the Cardinal in the reception room and received his blessing; he gave audience to quite a number of the visitors, after which he left. The immense crowd slowly passed out and the great day was over. On the 19th the new Home was opened for patients; those in Cherry Street were transferred and quite a few who had been waiting entered. 426 Cherry St. was closed and life in the new St. Rose's commenced.

"1913

"The year 1913 was an extremely difficult one for the new St. Rose's. Shortly before the opening day, December 15th, 1912, Mother Alphonsa said to me: 'I intend giving you full charge of the new building; you are to select the furniture and have everything just as you want it.' This was a great surprise for we all thought that Mother would make the new building her headquarters. However, I set about ordering the furniture, etc., and when the opening day came everything, with the exception of one floor, was in good order. On the 21st of January, 1913, Bishop Cusack came and consecrated the marble altar donated by Mr. Cornelius F. Cronin. The solemn ceremony was witnessed by a number of invited guests, and after the ceremony lunch was served. Mother enjoyed to the full these celebrations and she also enjoyed seeing old friends of the work. However, after this celebration came hard times; many patients came in, some terribly sick; the male department was opened for the first time in the history of St. Rose's. Everything was strange and new, and for a time our funds ran low. We saw Mother Alphonsa but rarely as her time was fully occupied at Rosary Hill Home. I went only now and then to Rosary Hill; I could not be spared from St. Rose's. On December 18th Cardinal Farley appointed Rev. James T. McEntyre as our Spiritual Director, stating that no one else had this authority. This appointment was a great blessing.

"December 31st, 1913.—The last day of a strange year—one filled with many blessings and innumerable crosses and difficulties.

"1914.

"The year of 1914 came in brightly and cheerfully—the past was gone and the present seemed hopeful. Two generous benefactors sent us large donations. On January 6th the Board of Trustees met at St. Rose's. Bishop Cusack was elected President, Mother Alphonsa, Treasurer, and I, Secretary. Rev. James T. McEntyre, Mr. J. Warren Greene, Mr. H. J. Reel and Mr. Cronin were present. The first meeting at St. Rose's was an eventful one—all were friends, Mr. J. Warren Greene, our oldest friend from the early Water Street days.

"January 20th—The Drug Auxiliary met for the first time this afternoon. Mr. H. J. Reel is in full charge. There was quite a number present and rules were drawn up for making this Auxiliary a means of buying medicines and cotton, etc.

"Mother sent out a fine report of the work—it received much praise. These reports mean an immense amount of work and most of it falls on Mother.

"All is going on well in the two Homes. Mother is well and she is always cheerful and happy. It is early Summer and the grounds around Rosary Hill are beautifully kept. Everything seems peaceful, although the papers seem to think that war is brewing in Europe.

"August 4th—The whole world seems suddenly to have clashed and at present nearly all the European countries are engaged in battle. Everything seems so sudden. For some time the moon has been coming up like a ball of fire—it may have been a forewarning of coming events. Money is scarce and few donations are coming in. We have many depending on us and debts must be paid.

"August 20th.—Pope Pius X is dead. The news came this morning. It seems doubly sad, coming at a time when Europe is a vast battlefield. Mother Alphonsa wrote in connection with the Pope's death:

> Dearest Sister:
>
> The terrible news of the death of the Holy Father has been a blow to us all, and, of course, I am heartbroken. He loved the poor, he understood them from having sprung from them, and he loved the truth and lived the teaching of Christ. To 'restore all things in Christ' was his chosen mission and he accomplished it when he prayed for enemies that it seemed hard to echo his prayer. He is gone—the dove that was suddenly imprisoned from his Venice; his great heart that was so full of artistic fire. It is terrible to lose his human hand out of the world.
>
> Your own loving,
>
> MOTHER M. ALPHONSA, O. S. D.

"The war continues to rage and Mr. Greene says modern civilization has had a fearful collapse. On September 3rd Benedict XV was elected.

"The September of 1914 was a troubled one to Mother Alphonsa, but such things must happen in all new foundations. Bad advice is always harmful. However, in a few weeks all was forgotten; the Community and the work continued to grow and we were beginning to receive good legacies. The Autumn grew into Winter and on December 18th Cardinal Farley appointed Bishop Cusack as our Ecclesiastical Superior. Christmas passed pleasantly in both Homes, but the pleasure was marred by the thought of countless homes made desolate by the great war then raging.

"On February 3rd, 1914, at a meeting of the Medal Committee and the Council of the National Institute of Social Sciences, held in New York, January 3rd, 1914, Mother Alphonsa was among the number to receive the Presentation Medal for notable service. She replied as follows:

Rosary Hill Home,
Hawthorne, New York,
Feb. 24, 1914.

Dr. H. Holbrook Curtis, Secretary.
Dear Sir:

I am very grateful to the Institute for looking so favorably upon my efforts to help a class of sufferers, by giving the remnant of my life to calling attention to them, as to grant me the medal which is bestowed upon Social Workers of whom the institute approves. I can think of nothing that may give more courage and holiness to my closing labors. My Sisters also will be cheered by this sign that their work is in the right direction. I thank you for your magnanimous words.

How shall I express what happiness I feel to find myself associated with Americans who have given me for so long the refreshment that one finds in contemplating nobility, and as I supposed from an insurmountable distance. In God I trust that the great and needed institute will triumph.

Gratefully yours,
M. ALPHONSA LATHROP.

"1915.

"The early part of 1915 was uneventful, but on April 21st we lost our great friend and benefactor, Cornelius F. Cronin, who died rather suddenly. As he had no home and had expressed some weeks previous to his death a desire to be buried from our Chapel, I had his remains

brought here. Many of his friends came to see him, and on the morning of April 23rd, after the Requiem Mass sung by Father McEntyre, we followed his remains to Calvary.

"Nothing of special importance happened until July 10th when we heard that Bishop Cusack had been made Bishop of Albany. On the 14th of September the ceremony of Reception and Profession took place at Rosary Hill; the Franciscan Father who conducted the Retreat officiated and preached the sermon and the boys from Columbus College (at Hawthorne close by) sang. Everything was simple and very impressive.

"1916.

"January 4th—The Annual Meeting of Trustees was held this P.M., and Father McEntyre was elected to succeed Bishop Cusack. After the meeting Mother went among the patients and made all very happy.

"Owing to several attacks of illness, I did not go to Rosary Hill for several months, but Mother came down on May 8th and I returned with her and remained until the 20th, her 65th birthday. Mother looks so fresh and young in spite of long hours of work that I think she will live to be very old.

"May 30th—I went to St. Peter's Church on Barclay Street this morning for the funeral of Mr. Edward Smith, a great benefactor, who with Mr. Cronin gave the money to start St. Rose's home.

"June 8th—On last Monday morning a High Requiem Mass was offered in our chapel for the soul of Edward Smith, who with Mr. C. F. Cronin laid the foundation

of the new St. Rose's Home—each gave $25,000.00. The Chapel was filled with the relatives of Mr. Smith, and in the sanctuary were Rt. Rev. Monsignor McGean and Father Noonan from St. Peter's where the Smith family were devout members. The Summer was uneventful as far as we were concerned, but the heat was at that time furious in its intensity.

"On August 24th we lost our old friend, Fr. Edmund Hill; he died in London after a long and painful illness. News of his death came through Father Fidelis.

"November 24th—Since writing in this book President Wilson has been reëlected.

"1917.

"January 2nd—Went to Rosary Hill today and found Mother Alphonsa very sick with a bad attack of the grippe. In fact she was too sick to rouse herself to greet me. I went about at once to rouse her, she responded and was able to take a little nourishment and in a few days was out of danger.

"February 20th—Since the first of February the country has been much disturbed by rumors of war.

"April 3rd—We lost our good and faithful friend, Mr. J. Warren Greene; he died rather suddenly in the latter part of March. It will be hard to fill his place. He came to the work in the early Water Street days and proved to the day of his death our faithful legal adviser.

"April 7th—On Good Friday President Wilson declared war with Germany; it was a gloomy day and the immediate prospect of war made it seem more so.

"On April 24th we had the Annual Meeting of Trustees which had been postponed on account of the serious illness of Mother Alphonsa. At the meeting the Rev. James T. McEntyre was elected President to fill the vacancy caused by the departure of Bishop Cusack, Mr. Henry J. Reel was elected Vice-President and Mr. George B. McEntyre was chosen to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mr. J. Warren Greene.

"August 21st—The Summer is passing; all day and during the night transports filled with soldiers pass up and down the river, they cheer as they pass and the people rush to the river bank to wave them farewell. Pope Benedict sent out a strong appeal for peace; it will probably be rejected as the war is raging.

"October 9th—The Autumn seems dreary. I see Mother now so seldom.

"On October 18th I went to Rosary Hill. Mother was well and so glad to see me. The country about Rosary Hill is gorgeous, the hills are red and gold and the fields filled with wild purple asters.

"December 17th—On the morning of December 10th Columbus College at Hawthorne burned to the ground; fortunately the boys and Fathers were able to get out without injury, but with only night clothes. Mother Alphonsa sent warm clothing and all that she could find to keep them warm, as also did the Jewish Protectory and soon the inmates of the College were cared for, but the building was a total wreck. One of the Fathers saved the Blessed Sacrament and a small statue, and that was all.

"1918.

"The New Year came in very cold, fuel was scarce and there was much suffering in consequence. The cold was so intense that one day I tried to go to Rosary Hill, but had to turn back. There is nothing but war news now.

"March 21st—A great battle is raging today; the Germans are forcing the Allies back and are destroying all in their way; they fight day and night.

"May 7th—Yesterday Mother came in for the Trustee's meeting. Deep regret was expressed over the serious illness of Bishop Cusack, our late President and Ecclesiastical Superior.

"June 2nd—The Allies are gaining gradually what they have lost and the Germans are falling back. Bishop Cusack is sick unto death, which from all reports is not far off.

"July 15th—Bishop Cusack died on July 12th and is, as I write, lying in state in his Cathedral in Albany. The people mourn their good and simple father.

"The war is now raging with terrific violence. The Allies are pushing the Germans back.

"September 15th—Yesterday the Annual Ceremony of Reception and Profession took place at Rosary Hill. I could not attend.

"His Eminence, Cardinal Farley, has been sick for several weeks. The papers reported him better for a time, but now they state he is much weaker.

"September 29th—Cardinal Farley died on September 17th; he lay in state for nearly a week and had a great public funeral. His loss will be greatly felt and we feel

that we have lost a faithful friend. He told Mother Alphonsa that he had followed her work from the very beginning and had always felt great interest in it.

"October 15th—The Spanish influenza is raging throughout the entire country. So many are dying in New York that they had to be buried in trenches.

"October 30th—I went to Rosary Hill yesterday. Mother was just recovering from a severe attack of indigestion. So far we have escaped the influenza in both Homes, but it continues to rage. A heavy gloom hangs over everything—the sun comes up in the morning like a ball of fire and then disappears behind heavy grey clouds.

"November 12th—Yesterday the great World War stopped as suddenly as it had commenced on August 4th, 1914, with victory on the side of the Allies. The city went wild with joy, the bells rang, the people shouted and sang, the whistles and sirens on the river made a great noise, which continued until night.

"December 31st—An eventful year closes tonight. It brought sorrow and death to many and the world has been changed.

"1919.

"January 10th—Mother has been quite sick, but thank God, is better. Col. Roosevelt died suddenly on Monday morning. Mother felt especially sorry, for his fine qualities made him a leader among men.

"February 15th—The war is over, but the whole world seems upside down. Murder and robbery are going hand in hand, but the wise say that such conditions always exist

after a great war, and that it will be a long time before things settle down.

"March 4th—Bishop Hayes has been appointed Archbishop of New York. He will have a difficult place to fill. We feel happy over his appointment.

"March 25th—On last Wednesday Archbishop Hayes was installed in St. Patrick's Cathedral by the Papal Delegate. I was present at the solemn and impressive ceremony.

"The treaty of Peace was signed June 28, 1919.

"On the 8th of December we received the legacy left us by Mrs. Sage and paid off the first mortgage of St. Rose's Home.

"1920.

"January 13th—This is a terrible winter—heavy snows and terrible winds; everything is very high and coal is scarce, wagons are going about dealing it out in small quantities to the poor. We are suffering the after-effects of the War.

"I could not go to Rosary Hill for the reason that the place is snow-bound, but all seems well there. The weather continued uncertain until late in Spring, and when I went to Rosary Hill, after a long absence, I found all green and beautiful. Mother leaves her desk at such times and works among her flowers.

"July 6th—Today we received the Carroll legacy; paid the second mortgage on St. Rose's and settled a large debt due on Rosary Hill.

"September 15th—Yesterday was Reception and Profession Day at Rosary Hill. Rt. Rev. Monsignor Cassidy

officiated and Father Alexis, C.P., preached. The young students from the Christian Brothers sang. It was very impressive.

"1921.

"On September 25th his Eminence, Cardinal O'Connell of Boston, paid a visit to Rosary Hill. On October 14th we lost our old and valued friend, Father Fidelis Stone. He passed away peacefully after a long and eventful life.

"1922.

"This year was one of special importance for it saw the beginning of a plan long in the mind of Mother Alphonsa—a fireproof home for the patients at Rosary Hill. She sent out her first appeal in the early part of April, and it met with few responses. However, that is usually the case with first appeals, so she continued sending them out and after a short time contributions for the new Rosary Hill came from all parts of the country.

"1923.

"In the early part of 1923 Mother Alphonsa had a severe attack from overwork. She had assumed the difficult task of answering the many letters that came in response to her appeals. However, she rallied, but it was some little time before she could resume her work.

"May 3rd—The Annual Meeting of the Trustees was held today at Rosary Hill for the first time. Mr. George B. McEntyre, one of the Trustees, looked wretched, but after the meeting he went with us to mark off the place

for the first of the fireproof buildings. At that meeting it was decided to make a start as there was sufficient money in the treasury to put up the first building. Mother Alphonsa seemed to gain new life at the decision, of the Board of Trustees, and she began that evening to make plans.

"On June 14th an operation was performed on Mr. George B. McEntyre, from which he failed to rally—he died July 5th.

"During the month of August Rt. Reverend Monsignor James T. McEntyre was appointed our Ecclesiastical Superior.

"The work on the first part of the new building was started shortly after the Trustees' Meeting, and by the middle of September the foundation was completed, and by the close of the year was well under cover.

"1924.

"The January of 1924 was alternately stormy and mild, and the work on the first part of the new building proceeded without much difficulty.

"February 13th—I went to Rosary Hill yesterday. Mother had the female ward in the new building all fixed up for me to see; it was really beautiful. Mother has worked very hard for this beginning and she deserves all the happiness she can get from it.

"April 25th—Yesterday Rt. Rev. Monsignor McEntyre came to Rosary Hill and blessed the new building which is now fully completed. It was a beautiful Spring day and Mother was radiant with happiness that a substantial beginning had been made. Everything was beau-

tiful and fresh, and Mother said: 'Now I must work very hard for the big building; this is only a beginning.'

"April 27th—Yesterday the most feeble patients were transferred to the new building.

"May 12th—The new building is filled with the sickest and most feeble patients. However, one old lady moved herself, bag and baggage, back to her old quarters; she did not feel at home with everything so new. The Sisters thought it funny, but Mother frowned upon the old lady's prompt return. May has so far been a cold, rainy month. Mother has not been so well. I wish the weather would turn warm so she could go among her flowers and blossoms and work about the grounds; she takes special pleasure in such work.

"May 30th—On the 26th the Annual Meeting of the Trustees was held at Rosary Hill. There was a vacant place—Mr. George B. McEntyre—he had looked like death the previous year, and indeed lived only a few months after the meeting. We miss the friends who fall away one by one. Important matters were discussed and all went well. Mother was to go on with the building and to build without debt, if possible.

"August 1st—The Summer passed peacefully. The latter part of July the final mortgage was paid on St. Rose's Home and it is now completely free of debt.

"September 15th—Yesterday Mother and I celebrated our Silver Jubilee. All along we had opposed any celebration, but finally concluded to have one. However, the decision was made too late to send out invitations, so Mother sent the invitation through the press. Many old friends of the work responded and a large crowd gath-

ered for the occasion. The celebration was especially marked by a donation of $50,000 to the building fund in memory of Edward Smith. This donation was given by his brothers, George and John Smith, and was really the foundation stone of the proposed new building, just as Edward Smith's donation of $25,000 had been the foundation stone of St. Rose's new Home. Rt. Rev. Monsignor McEntyre officiated and Rev. Clement M. Thuente, O.P. preached the sermon. It was a review of 25 years from the day he received us as Dominican Tertiaries in old St. Rose's Home, Cherry Street, when the work seemed so small. Mother Alphonsa especially enjoyed the day and was untiring in her energy to make all happy. A cablegram from Rome brought the blessing of the Holy Father and ended a perfect day. After the Silver Jubilee the ordinary routine of life went on with nothing of sufficient importance to record.

"1924 was an eventful year. It marked the opening of the first part of the new building, in which the helpless patients could be secure, the Silver Jubilee, and the donation that gave the building fund a secure foundation.

"1925.

"January came in unusually stormy; heavy snow and sleet storms made the streets almost impassable. Storm after storm came—always with either snow or sleet and the streets were piled high. I went to Rosary Hill in one of the storms and remained all night. Mother was well as snowy weather always acted like a tonic on her.

"February 25th—The Lenten lectures of Dr. James J. Walsh will commence on the second Friday of Lent.

Mother is always deeply interested in these lectures, and they have helped much to spread a knowledge of the work.

"April 12th—The Lenten lectures proved successful and Mother was much pleased.

"Yesterday we had the annual meeting of Trustees. This time the meeting was held in the charming little cottage Mother had built near the chapel.

"Nothing of special importance happened until the 17th of July when Bowdoin College celebrated the Centennial of Hawthorne and Longfellow. At the celebration the Faculty conferred the degree of M.A. on Mother Alphonsa. A telegram was sent to say that the degree was conferred in honor of her distinguished father and the good work she was doing.

"July 14th—On the 9th Mother and I called on His Eminence, Cardinal Hayes in connection with the new building. He was very genial and gracious and went over the plans with Mother, saying he fully understood them as he had gone over them with the members of the Council, and he gave Mother permission for all the necessary changes she wished to make. After leaving the Cardinal's House Mother returned immediately to Rosary Hill.

"The remainder of the Summer passed quietly. On the 14th of September the Reception and Profession took place as usual, but with the difference that lunch was served in front of the new building under a large tent; the view from there is magnificent. However, she was not so well after that day, and in the latter part of October became seriously ill and for a time we were very anxious. After the cold weather set in she improved and

was as usual. She promised me faithfully not to overdo, but such promises are difficult to keep.

"1926.

"I became very ill the day after Christmas. Mother came to St. Rose's to see me on January 21st, the day was like one in Spring; she came loaded with presents; she always loved St. Rose's; she was very cheerful and happy and said to me: 'When I have collected sufficient for the new Home I will stop for I am very tired of writing, and when the new Home is up, I will devote my time to the Sisters and the work. I need a rest' (but that rest never came for Mother wrote to within a few hours of her death). She said when leaving, 'I will come again very soon,' but that was her last visit. February was very stormy, and in the early Spring she was too busy to leave even for a day. It is with deep sorrow that I recall these last few months, and little did the Sisters who bade goodbye to Mother Alphonsa on that mild January day realize it would be the last.

"April 28th—This has been a cold dreary month. Easter Sunday was cold. I went to Rosary Hill on the 7th and remained for two days. I had not been there since last December. Mother was disturbed about changes in her building plans, but I had a pleasant visit.

"On the 18th of April Mother Alphonsa received the medal for faithful service among the poor from the Rotary Club. A number of prominent members of the Club with their wives came up and Mother wrote me that the meeting was 'distinguished and noble' from beginning to end. Some speeches were made and responded

to, a light lunch was served and Mother was very happy. Her picture appeared in the New York papers the following day, but only that in the Times looked like her. The Medal is where she placed it; it made her happy and it will always be precious to the members of the Community.

"May 11th—On April 29th the Trustees' meeting was held at Rosary Hill. It was a pleasant as well as an important meeting. Mother felt in good health and she seemed more like herself than for months past. At the next meeting her place was empty; all felt her absence and mourned her departure.

"May 24th—On the 20th Mother celebrated her 75th birthday. I spent the day with her. Mother looks young, her eyes are clear and her voice sounds like a silver bell; there is nothing in her face to indicate age. I feel she will live to be very old. She has a brilliant mind and a ready pen. Such were my thoughts as I looked at her. It was a perfect day, and the country around Rosary Hill was beautiful in its Spring dress, the flowers and blossoms were in full bloom.

"June 17th—On the 14th of June the new fireproof building was started, a memorable day in the history of the work. The building will hold one hundred beds. It will be in the Spanish style of architecture; for some years past Mother Alphonsa has carefully worked out the plan, even to the smallest detail. She worked hard to secure the funds for building; she wanted a secure home for the patients, and if sufficient was collected, also for the Community. She had been delayed from time to

time, and like all strong, impulsive characters she felt the delay very keenly, but, strange to say, now that the work has really commenced she seems indifferent, something unusual, for Mother is always so enthusiastic. Probably when the foundation is laid and the building well started, her interest will increase, but it never did; probably she felt the coming of the 'Visitor' that we all must meet some day. She said she did not feel strong, but otherwise she seemed as usual.

"June 22nd—Mother wanted especially to see Rt. Rev. Monsignor McEntyre. He came today and had a talk with her. In the early afternoon we walked over to see the men working on the foundation of the new building. We also had a meeting to talk over matters with the contractor, and her mind seemed unusually clear. Several matters had to be settled and she went into the smallest details of same. To me she looked as usual, but Rt. Rev. Monsignor McEntyre, who had not seen her since the Trustees' Meeting on April 29th, said to me over the plans, 'Mother does not look well, it is the first time I have ever seen her look badly. I do not think she is well.' On June 30th a comfortable chair I had ordered for her desk came; it had been ordered weeks previously, but it gave her the greatest pleasure.

"And now I come to my last visit with Mother; it was on July 5th. I brought with me a young girl to enter the Novitiate. Mother met us at the door; she did not look well, and I was surprised and said: 'Mother, why did you come down?' She answered: 'I want to welcome this child.' It was her last postulant; she wore her gradu-

ation dress to show to Mother. Mother was pleased and said, 'How lovely, dear! I feel the Lord has indeed blessed the work when He inspired little girls like you to come to work for His poor.' That same afternoon we sat together on a little porch and talked much of the past and planned for the future. As we sat there, a flock of pigeons flew in groups around several times and then settled on the grass. Mother watched them and said, 'How lovely!' and added, 'I know the pigeons do more or less damage, but I love to see them fly in groups, and when I first came here, with everything so hard, I often felt lonesome and they were a great consolation to me.' I remained over night and the next morning Mother and I talked over many things, but several times I caught her looking sadly at me as though she wanted to say something and could not make up her mind to do so. When I said goodbye that afternoon little did I dream that it would be for the last time—beloved Mother Alphonsa.

"July 17th—On the 7th of July I said goodbye to Mother Alphonsa, little thinking it was the last on earth. On the evening of July 8th I called up Rosary Hill and asked how Mother felt, and the answer came back, 'She was fine today, went to Mass and received Holy Communion, and after looking over her mail, she came down at 10 o'clock, went to the new house, watched the men pouring the concrete and expressed great happiness at the progress of the work, and then went to see the flowers, and said that she had not felt so strong for a long time.' I felt so relieved to hear the good news, that when early on the morning of the 9th the telephone rang I felt no

anxiety, for it often rang in the early morning in connection with very sick patients. The Sister who had charge of the telephone said, 'It is from Rosary Hill and Mother is very sick.' 'There must be some mistake,' I said, 'for Mother was feeling fine last night.' Then Sister said, 'Mother died in her sleep last night.' The shock was so terrible that my heart seemed to stop beating for the moment. 'Impossible,' I said, 'Mother cannot be dead,' but the news was too true. Mother had written up to ten o'clock and then retired, seeming as usual. As was her custom she made notes of special things to have done the following day. When the Sister went in the morning to call her, there was no response; after repeating the call she went to the bedside and found Mother in the peaceful sleep of death. What a great sorrow for the community and the work; what a great sorrow for myself who have been so closely connected with her for 28 years. I shared her joys and sorrows; we worked together in the greatest harmony and her last letter was written to me. She passes now from this Diary, and with her passing I close the record of my association with our good and beloved Mother. She was a noble and courageous woman; she never changed her first plans in connection with the work; she had great confidence in the general public and the public responded generously to her appeals. What she promised she made good. She had strong faith in Divine Providence and she was a prayerful and devout woman; time was precious to her, her hands were never idle, even when recovering from her many attacks of illness, she would make notes, knit or sew. She had a wonderfully cheerful disposition and great love for the poor and af-

flicted. Often when a patient's family was in need she would help the family, thereby relieving the anxiety of the patient. Thus I close my record of Mother Alphonsa. She has left us, but her spirit remains."

XIV

TRIFLES IN THE WEB OF LIFE—AND DEATH

Some of the numbers of *Christ's Poor* containing Mother Alphonsa's current notes with regard to her beloved cancer patients serve to show how small may be the events that make up a life which might seem to be almost stark tragedy in a home where all the patients are carrying "the body of their death" around with them. Yet these notes reveal how much of interest there may be even under the most discouraging circumstances. Trifles light as air may become stuff of weightiest significance when existence is lived on suffrance from day to day and there is no assurance which may be the last. At Rosary Hill Home the very littlest of things, as human standards go, made up the web of life and yet the patients were nearly always quite consciously weaving the weft of an eternal life, and in their forgetfulness of self and thoughtfulness for others were finding the best possible means for relief from their own pains and aches. "Life looks very different," said Dean Stanley of St. Paul's, London, after an illness in which neither he nor his friends had any hopes of his recovery, "when viewed from the horizontal, especially if you have no very definite prospect of viewing it from the vertical again." These patients most of them were seeing life from the bed on which they were to die,

yet life was not without interest for them and not without moments of happiness and even joy.

The one supreme effort of the Sisters now that they had entered their own Home down on the Lower East Side of New York was to make the surroundings just as cheerful as possible for their patients. Flowers and fresh green things were placed here and there through the house, were renewed at regular intervals in the rooms, making little oases in the desert of life for their poor afflicted patients. In *Christ's Poor* for December, 1901, the success of their efforts in this regard was brought out, and Mother Alphonsa rejoiced over the fact that now that the Home was better known the good Sisters were being helped very efficiently in the tasks they had undertaken:

"The Home grew prettier and became better known, receiving much attention from the public. Callers, letters, gifts of money and clothing, second-hand furniture, several large consignments of groceries, and frequent donations of fruit, flowers and wine, brightened almost every day with a gracious surprise. Many blessings from the clergy and religious, and from the poor indicated that God approved of the effort made by us to join the ranks of the servants to divine command."

The description of St. Rose's Home written at the time of its opening by a friend for the *Rosary Magazine* (the monthly publication of the Dominicans) will give the best possible idea of conditions as they existed in the early days during the first years of the twentieth century:

"St. Rose's Home stands in a very populous district, but possesses the advantage of being near Corlears Hook

Park, a cheery space of grass and river front, cool, spacious, inviting, where the poor are ever welcome; adults to rest, children to run about and frolic. The Home is attended by the priests from St. Teresa's Church on Henry and Rutgers Streets. On March 7, 1913, Reverend James T. McEntyre (now Right Reverend Monsignor McEntyre, president of St. Joseph's Seminary) became director of St. Rose Home, a post which he continued to occupy for some ten years. Reverend Joseph B. Cherry, his successor in the parish, continued the good work. Many others among both regular and secular clergy have won the lasting gratitude of the Sisters and their poor incurables.

"From the ranks of the medical and legal profession, from the ranks of business men, have stepped forth those who have given invaluable service to the young work. Many ladies have given their time to help in all possible ways, visiting the sick, rolling bandages, sewing, etc. Out of the abundance of some, out of the poverty of others, have come from men and women the offerings that have helped to lessen the pain of body and anguish of mind inseparable from the poor when going down into the valley of the shadow of death, they must tread this most thorny of paths. That this little article may win earnest prayer and temporal help for this holy and Christlike cause the writer dares hope; but yearns for yet more, that it may touch souls somewhere with the fire that burns often long and deep before the on-looker dreams that it is even kindled—the fire of vocation to see Christ and serve Him in His poor and suffering members.

"A touching scene occurs once a week, when the Holy

Sacrifice is offered in the oratory of St. Rose's Cherry St. The oratory is on the second floor, between two larger rooms, in each of which are four patients. It would be one of New York's proverbial 'dark rooms' were it not for the two doors on either side which afford a way for the sufferers to hear Mass. But when the tapers illumine the little place, with its pretty altar and well-chosen pictures and statues, and when one sees within it the kneeling Sisters, and within and around it the emaciated forms and faces of their well-loved sufferers, the great truth that in the Catholic Church every form of human suffering and misery finds a mother is forced home to the mind with startling vividness. The priest enters: the Mass commences and goes on. *'Sursum Corda,'* 'Lift up your hearts;' *'Gratias agamus Domino Deo Nostro,'* 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.' How sublime it is, that call of the Preface to thanksgiving, uttered there in the house of sure, though perhaps only slowly approaching death. How heroic is the response, *'Vere dignum et justum est.'* 'Truly it is meet and just,' when uttered there, making death a way for life! The bell tinkles for the *'Sanctus'*, again, then thrice, and He Who is the Way, the Truth, the Life, is verily in their midst. The celebrant communicates, and the Sisters; then, ciborium in hand, the priest goes all around to patients on their *prie-dieux,* in chairs and beds, all through the chapel and to the floor above, a Sister carrying a lighted taper, the server with communion board; thus around he goes till the Bread of Life has been given to the poor ones stricken with death. It is a sight to be remembered ever after.

"The Sisters have a roof-garden, and make the most

also of every little spot of verdure about the premises, so that in easy chairs, under awnings, etc., the poor patients may get a glimpse of the sun and the trees and the sea. The Sisters need more room for their men patients, and they need more Sisters to nurse the sick of both sexes whom they have already."

Conditions at the country home at Hawthorne were even more joyous. Some of these patients at Rosary Hill Home had come into the hospital in the city apparently only as a passing place of residence for a short time before death. The improved conditions physical and mental, however, accomplished so much for their relief that they revived in health and strength and found contentment if not something very like happiness for a time at least amongst Mother Alphonsa's Servants of Relief and their fellow cancer patients. Here for instance are three notes on the cancer patients which serve to afford an excellent idea of the spirit of the home and how much the poor patients actually enjoyed it. In *Christ's Poor* [1] Mother Alphonsa wrote:

"Mr. H.——, whose condition five years ago suggested that death was staying his unwelcome advance but for a few days, is so much refreshed by the country Home's air and sunlight, that he is often highly talkative and diligent. Yet his case is an extremely severe one, and at times he is too weak with pain to rise from his bed. In the alternate seasons of brave spirits, he tried to please some one, and remember everybody. All the male cases are very grateful for the care of Sisters who minister to them daily, in various ways, assisted by a male nurse. In the

[1] February, 1904, page 31.

past summer, Mr. H.—— went into the flower-laden fields to gather huge bouquets for the assistant superioress of St. Rose's Free Home, when she came almost every week to visit the novices at Rosary Hill Home. There never were so many daisies and buttercups, or golden-rods and asters in any other bouquets, pressed down, and running over.

"When cooler weather set in, fruit from our trees became the means of expressing energetic gratitude; and as a last resort, the somewhat hard grapes, pears and apples given to the old man at his meals, and impossible to relish because unsuccessful from an unfavorable summer, little Mr. H.—— saved for Sr. M.F., tying it all up in his red bandana handkerchief, 'until', as he himself said, 'it has become good and soft, Sister. You need not be afraid to eat it now, for I've kept it in my handkerchief for ever so long!'

"We have had an old German lady with us for nearly three years. She may die at any moment from the disease, and is sometimes very ill abed. Usually, however, she is sitting in stately immobility in her room, or in an easy chair in the long hallway. She was brought from the almshouse on Blackwell's Island, where she was obliged to go for the reason that her sons' wives would not allow her to remain with them. It was impossible to blame the daughters-in-law very severely for it under the circumstances. The old lady had wept steadily for a couple of weeks, as she sat by her bed in the almshouse; and the two sons came to us in despair, to beg us to receive her. The doctor thought that she could only live a little while. She never smiled one bit, and would not move from her

chair; but she did not cry any more when once with us, and soon became less thin and pale. When the country Home was secured, we determined to fetch her out to it, to see the flowers and live stock, and really enjoy life. She is very deaf and very German, and not at all English, so that communication with her is somewhat like that at present secured with the North Pole. The most frantic gesticulations could not move an eyelash of the old lady, while we tried to motion her to look out of a window upon the garden; and the mere pantomimic suggestion of taking her out for a walk in the air, made her gesticulate on her part in a manner that put a string of periods to the idea."

They are ingenious for their patients at Rosary Hill Home, so after a while in spite of the persistent refusals they got the old lady to go out. The motive that prompted her is all the more interesting because it would not be expected to have any influence over so old a woman, especially as she was suffering from incurable cancer. But what will a new dress not do for a woman in making her want to show it off and it matters not apparently to whom.

"One of the Sisters is really remarkable for devices, and cheerily came to tell the Mother of the family, that 'Grossmother' as she is called, had (after a year's interval) actually taken her constitutional in the garden 'and enjoyed the chickens and ducks.' The Mother burst out into smiles. 'I had first put on her the handsome black satin dress which you said must be used (it was a splendid second-hand donation) and I happened to think I would ask her if she would walk out in it; and she got right up from her chair, as eager as you please, and we went out for half an hour!' When the weather was fine, thereafter,

the black satin gown was sure to be selected, and out went Grossmother. But one day the weather was not so good; yet, being Sunday, the dress went on. The Sister ran to another duty. Alas, the old German lady gave us a great fright. In cold and damp she had taken her feeble way alone down the stairs, and was not noticed until she had reached the 'yard of ducks.' They had admired her appearance, no doubt, which was what she wanted. Then, she was led back, stately as ever (but always of late with a happy smile upon her aristocratic old face) to the utmost warmth and warmest hugs of the household, her constant companion tightly clutched to her bosom through every event,—that is to say, her Lutheran prayer-book!

"Some of the patients at least have discovered at the Home that one day's paper is just as good as another and in the face of the long passing from mundane affairs not far off that one may find as much interest in one as in another.

"The newspapers in the country Home are sometimes scarce, whereas the patients are quite numerous; and a Sister one day was obliged to beg pardon of Mrs. H. for asking her to lend a paper she was reading to one of the men-patients, who greatly desired to see about a bit of news. The kind woman-patient was glad to interrupt her pastime, and exclaimed: 'Well, now, you can give it back to me tomorrow; tomorrow is as long as today,—or almost!' "

Sunshine and Sorrow

Mother Alphonsa's one idea was to bring as much sunshine as possible into the lives of the sorrowful souls

whose death was already with them, not far ahead, and it might be that it would come through severe suffering. Her own account after ten years of intimate association with the destitute cancer patients shows this very well. Dante's *Purgatorio* pictures a place where there is suffering as far as human beings can stand and yet mingled with joy and satisfaction because heaven is not far ahead and is assured. One might almost think of Dante's place of purgation in reading Mother Alphonsa's account of what she called "a department of sunshine for sorrowful souls." [3] She was particularly pleased that she had been able, though at first it had been apart from her intention or expectation, to bring sunshine into the lives of the men patients. Nothing is so forlorn as a man in suffering and with only suffering to look forward to without the kindly presence of women and women's care to relieve his agonies:

"Into the most meagre alley of the slums a ray of sunlight brings a very different life, which bids defiance to sorrow for the time of its sojourn. A moment only will it stay, changing the grimy stone into cheerful richness. So there are momentary seasons of enjoyment for our poor sufferers, even in their life of approaching execution by their disease, because sunlight has been poured upon their dwelling with us, from charity, out of the clear ether of good fortune, and from the hearts of the well-to-do, who seem to us high up and far off and fair; and if hours are cold with suffering, moments at any rate are radiant with gratitude, and the physical relief it is thankful for.

"Not seldom, the direct rays of this sunlight fall upon our department for male cases. We brought the men

[3] *Christ's Poor*, 1904, p. 24.

who asked, 'Is there no place for us?' into the work we planned to do only for women, because we had a little sunshine to share. That is something that must not be denied to anyone, for it comes straight down from the King of planets, who has even seemed to weave the robe of light Christ wore, when He revealed His divinity most evidently. We could not refuse sunshine, when we really had it to give.

"Now we know that others agree with us. Our male department in the Country Home is particularly interesting to those who know what a male cancer-patient can suffer, and bravely endure. Several patrons of the charity have given donations for the male cases alone; and this house, our Rosary Hill Home, was secured by the payment of $1,000.00, which had been given by a dozen people of wealth for the succor of men thus afflicted.

"At the opening of last February, a lady wrote to ask how we would be able to use 'a small sum of money, only a thousand dollars, to bring a little brightness into the life of some one who suffers.' She desired it, if possible, to be used for some one purpose; and as it would be given in memory of a brother who was dead, it seemed probable that she would prefer to have this one benefit of a kind to cheer our male cases. We therefore selected a manner of expending the 'small sum' (which seemed to us very large) exclusively for the men in the Home. It must be admitted that this required more than a trifling determination. We had large and pressing debts, and there was work needed upon the house which it would be disastrous to defer. A large ceiling was ready to fall, and a number of hygienic improvements were demanded. But that made

THE NEW ROSARY HILL HOME

no difference. The brother's memory must be suitably honored by us, and the sister's generosity met as nearly half-way as we could do so; and therefore we gave the only suggestions that were sincere and effective.

"Cheerful results: a summer-house to be built for our men-patients; and the green-house to be made a thing of reality, instead of a tantalizing foolery. The summer-house is to be of solid frame-work, upon a sturdy stone base, because one summer-house here has been known to tumble in a night under the hand of a roaring wind. It is needed, because it is found that the men prefer of all things, from early till late out-door weather, to lie either lounging or asleep under the little trees of their especial garden. They are to be seen travelling laboriously to this garden, pillows and shawls under their arms, or followed by the male nurse or a Sister with these comfortable accessories, if shattered health is very feeble indeed. Below them lies the pretty valley, with a semi-circle of railroad spinning off into the distance, or whizzing back again with human freight aboard. All goes quite well until a sudden shower comes our way, hand in hand with that wind of the hill; and at once the dozing patients are in no end of a dilemma, without the slightest warning. We could think of nothing so fascinatingly welcome to the weary bones and still interested eyes of the male cases as a summer-house all their own.

"We next thought of the green-house, because our men are often accustomed to gardening, and fond of flowers, and would be amused by visits to the plants in winter. At present the little precinct is small as a toy bank. Its glass roofing flings periodic panes upon the Sisters' heads, and

the broken bricks allow the ingress of a very fat rabbit, which appreciates all the seedlings and youthful sprouts that are prepared, from lemon-leaves to lettuce and pansies. The heating pipes may once have 'het,' but they now cool the green-house. No sane patient would find delight there. We trust that this will be one of the consolations of our much-bored winter sick folk, when the flower home's size has been enhanced, and little squads of flower-pots are assigned to different members of the invalid family.

"The reason that no other needs of the male patients were mentioned, or could be called large and single benefits capable of classification as memorial gifts, is, that our men need very few things, except such simple supplies as rapidly disappear. They care so little for a parlor, in their present small contingent of ten, that we seldom have any male case who will sit in one, though we have several times put a room apart as a parlor. Our cases being so very advanced, as a rule, in the disease, they often hardly care to look or move; and they seldom care to look at each other. A few are 'great friends' and chat for an interval. But what they want is a warm spot in winter, and an airy one in summer; and a smoke—ah, that is the most unexpected thing of all to record—a smoke in a corner where even a cat would feel lonesome. My smoking-room for the men echoed with desolate spaces. Let the spirits of fire-insurance companies sink, and people of eminent precaution become red-hot with indignation, but the truth has a merit not to be covered—and the truth is, that late in the evening Rosary Hill Home is permeated (on the side nearest the men's department) with a pun-

gent suggestion of our 'Veteran' tobacco. The male nurse cannot prevent it, and the Mother will not. But both are vigilant. So, to build and fit up either a parlor or a smoking room, might look well, but would never be but an ornate shamming in the face of death. We are deeply resolved never to descend to shamming in our care of the destitute sick. We might fit up a cellar of wine and ales, and stronger cordials, for the expense of these necessaries is heavy; but there is an instability about such amenities which is unsuited to memorial dignity. We might wish for a new wing to the Home, to be outspread over a greater number of male cases; but what of the thousands of dollars required by such a venture?

"Fortunately, our dear benefactress was perfectly satisfied with our suggestions; and the men are already bestirring themselves to sit and lounge in the summer-house, which is to be large enough for couches and easy-chairs, shade and breezes.

"It is, however, a little *triste* to reflect, that the women's summer-house was blown down two years ago, and there is none for them. It was their favorite spot. It stood on a high knoll close to the little vineyard, and not far from the chapel, and in the midst of vines and views. Its melancholy central table, surrounding the pole of its deck in genial suggestion of tea-cups and magazines, stands silhouetted against the four quarters of the sky but honeysuckle and grapes, and orioles and humming birds no longer disport themselves on the vanished trellises of the circumference. We hope that the sky will eventually let fall a hundred dollars—nay, treble that sum—in order to erect a spacious summer-house for the

sick women, who rejoice in the garden-precincts of Rosary Hill, but have no sure retreat from the heat, when sunshine shifts about the horizon and puts a tree at a disadvantage."

The Poor As They Are

Mother Alphonsa knew how little of real interest for the poor there was in the minds of a great many people. She realized that very often when people did what they called charity, there was no cordial tinge of real charity about it but it represented refined selfishness. After all, if hearing the story of the sufferings of the poor causes us to feel uncomfortable and we can lessen our own sense of discomfort by contributing to charity, we may be much more intent on relieving our own feelings than in affording relief to the poor.

Mother Alphonsa tried to have people put themselves in the place of the poor, for she felt that only in that way is born in us a feeling of true brotherhood and readiness to help. In her article in *Christ's Poor* for October, 1901, on "The Poor As They Are Found," she makes her statement of real charity as she understands it and asks people to put themselves in the place of the poor—yes, even the poorest of the poor. After dwelling among the poor for some years on the Lower East Side of New York City no one could appreciate better than Mother Alphonsa just how hard it was to put one's self in the place of the poor and yet how much doing so meant for genuine sympathy with them:

"Presuppose every condition of your own as robbed of any possible amelioration. Think of yourself or family

as burned out, house and clothes; a telegraphic despatch has arrived that the bank or mine in which all your money is invested has collapsed; then, that your well-to-do relatives, living in a part of the country which you have never seen, have refused to send you aid; that your former acquaintances consider your misfortune to be the result of dishonorable practices on your part and will have nothing to do with you; that you have become liable to the attacks of charity organizations, which will discuss over the prostrate body of your disaster their relative right to deal with you before submitting you to numerous humiliations and scant fare; and that your desire for honest work will be answered by the formula that you are too numerous and are not needed. In drawing this picture of yourself and your beloved immediate relatives, you will be making an excellent picture of the poor who live not far from you. Now, if you were in this situation you would surely have something to say of the other side, when you are told that more fortunate people have their lives to live and cannot wreck them by stopping to do anything for you. The cries of your hungry children, the pallor of your wife, the trembling of your own heart, the sure consciousness rising before you that as the years go on you will sink lower down in degradation and corruption, will make you rebel against being left in the miserable situation where you lie prone. You will ask, 'Is there not one to help me, who will risk his life for my sake?'

"Persons who make up their minds to go down to the poor and stay among them, seeing what they need in any kind of help, and seeing how any kind of help affects them,

will, as I hinted above, be surprised to recognize in them traits already familiar in another class. I am, of course, more familiar with that side of the poor which is diseased, and that side of the question which is met by nursing, which is the simplest of all relations. The sick person needs food and medicine and gets it; the nurse is interested in reviving the convalescent or laying out the dead, and she has her hands full. Those who wish to educate the poor intellectually or spiritually, and who sicken, finding themselves baffled, have a much harder task. But, nevertheless, as nurses, women will see a thousand wrongs to set right, a thousand abuses to complain of, a thousand opportunities that ought to be taken up and handled with knowledge and the advantage of culture.

"In the very midst of the weedy confusion of grossness and dissipation and cruelty, there springs up a sudden and unexplained flower of perfect loveliness, or a strong growth of sterling, manly quality. Over all the sin there often rests a beautiful atmosphere which God permits, to ennoble many a scene of life which in the total sweep is obnoxious. There are days when we exclaim how much God has given to human nature which He will never permit it to lose; that it is not so inexplicable that Christ delighted to be with the sons of men, and that there is no wonder that in spite of His tears, He thought it worth while to remember the ideal aspect of souls who could sin so much. We explain the love of God for the poor by His love for Peter, the grandeur of whose faith was made strong through the weakness of his denials of Christ. The poor can do and feel heroic things.

"I have begun to believe that the obnoxious traits of

the poor (the very first glimpses of which repel us so much that we can hardly join them and clasp hands with them, however good our purpose) are deliberately chosen for them, that we may in our recognition of duty begin at the very beginning of sacrifice, overcoming first our most obvious failings in generosity, which are our superficial tastes, that the work of our spiritual sacrifice may be as complete as everything else is, that is done by God. From the first shock, which is carnal and superficial, we go on to refinements of revulsion, which being disowned for the sake of human brotherhood, we at last find ourselves standing side by side with the poor and acknowledging ourselves guilty of every misdemeanor attributed to the man shackled with the handcuffs of misfortune, though our sin wears a different color."

XV

HAPPINESS WITH DEATH IMPENDING

Undoubtedly the most striking feature of Mother Alphonsa's cancer homes, especially for the casual visitor, is that cheerfulness is the badge worn by every one except those in acute pain. There is actually a spirit of joy and cheerfulness and even gayety, though not levity, about the place. Laughter and happiness are manifestly contagious under circumstances where it might seem as though they would be banished forever. No wonder that under these conditions we hear of patient after patient, brought into the homes in what seemed to be almost a dying condition, reviving under the care of the good Sisters to live on for days and weeks with a satisfaction in life that had seemed henceforth impossible for such sufferers. Over and over again patients were brought in whose friends had bidden them a last goodbye, thinking they would never see them alive again. After being dressed carefully by the good Sisters—for they delegated that work to no one else—these patients would have a sense of physical comfort such as they had not enjoyed for months or perhaps even for a year, followed by a feeling of contentment because now they knew all their future was guaranteed and they would murmur as they let their heads sink to rest on the pillow, "This is heaven." The specter of cancer still hung over them, never to be

dissipated, but it failed to depress them except at intervals of exacerbation of their affection, while their despondency was neutralized by the calm cheerfulness of the Sisters and the cordial welcome extended into a family where others were suffering like themselves.

From the very beginning of their work it was more than a little surprising to the Servants of Relief to note how cheerful and even happy in the midst of their usually rather rapid and always painful course toward death, their cancer patients could be, once they were made even reasonably comfortable. A new outlook on existence came to them after they had had their needs attended to with a skill and tenderness which greatly lessened the pain and above all made them cease to be offensive either to themselves or others. Many of them actually seemed to take on new life, and some of them improved so much in health and strength as the result of the fresh courage and the renewed appetite for food that came to them, that sometimes fond hopes were aroused in their hearts, for a time at least, of recovery from their disease, in spite of the fact that it had been declared inevitably fatal.

The experience with these patients made it perfectly clear to those who were brought intimately in touch with them, how it was that so many new-fangled cancer cures secured a vogue. Manifestly anything that serves to encourage and to raise hope and stimulate patients to put off the mood of despair into which they have drifted, will do them so much good for the time being at least, that distinct improvement occurs, sometimes to such an extent that even recovery may seem possible. No wonder

then that so many of the so-called cancer cures produce on patients so favorable an impression that they become persuaded that the remedies must actually have some curative value.

Many a cancer patient who a few months afterwards has been under the sod because of the progress of his malignant affection, has in all good faith given a testimonial to the curative value of some remedy which really affected his mind and not his body. The physical degenerative process has gone right on, but the patient felt ever so much better as the result of the new courage with which he was inspired. The devoted nursing of the Servants of Relief and the atmosphere of peace and consolation which surrounded them were enough of themselves to create a favorable attitude of mind and make the patient feel better. The conditions thus observed made a further demonstration that many of the complaints of cancer patients are not due to physical factors but to mental states and these can be relieved or greatly mitigated by sympathetic nursing.

Under Mother Alphonsa's loving care—and she made it a wise provision that not hired help but the Sisters themselves should care for the patients—life even in its progress toward death from cancer became ever so much more bearable, and the patients did not increase their ills and ails by over-solicitude about them. Such over-solicitude disturbs many of the functions of the body, producing symptoms in no way related to the cancer and yet adding distinctly to the patient's misery. This functional disturbance of the general health makes patients ever so much more sensitive to their pains and aches than before

and multiplies their sense of suffering. Cancer is incurable, but a cancer patient can be made so much more comfortable than his worry about himself would ordinarily permit that life seems a very different thing from what it was before.

As Mother Alphonsa said: "To see a destitute incurable cancer patient full of delight and crying out in thanksgiving and contentment is a remarkable sight indeed. Many do so, even the most terrible cases to look upon when they are received and nursed with fraternal cordiality." Quite needless to say this was a great source of encouragement to the Sisters themselves and especially to those who were just beginning their career as helpers among the Servants of Relief. The physician who went through the wards and saw the wonderful effect produced on the patients, felt above all that it was the sisterly tenderness extended to the patient that meant most in helping him to overcome so many symptoms which had been disturbing him before. Only rarely among cancer patients treated in their own homes were good effects noted to anything like the same extent, for the cheerful attention of the good Sisters meant very much in the encouragement of the patient.

A sympathetic nurse with tender hands can do more to relieve, above all, that discouraging pain of mind, which can under certain circumstances cause ever so much more discomfort than pain of body, than any of the medicines that the pharmacopeia provides. The opiates and the coal-tar anodynes can relieve the physical pains, but only human sympathy can minister to the mind dis-eased. Among the male patients particularly so many of whom

had been the subject of almost utter neglect for some time before their entrance into what to them seemed so well called home, this effect was strikingly noticed. Old men went back to the use of the word, "mother," and the almost equally tender word, "sister," once again, with a gentle accent that they had not employed since their boyhood. When the first dressing in their new home was finished they became aware that their future care was to be in such tender hands for the rest of their lives. They breathed a deep sigh of relief that may well be said to have come from the bottom of their hearts.

James Clarence Mangan, the well-known Irish poet of the middle of the nineteenth century, said once, when toward the end of his life, he had been living in dirt and squalor up in a slum garret for months, and the Sisters of Mercy at the great Misericordia Hospital in Dublin took him in to keep him for good, for manifestly the end was not far off: "Oh, the luxury of clean sheets." Many a male cancer patient in Mother Alphonsa's home reechoed the poignant ejaculation of the poor Irish poet. Neglect and poverty had been their lot for months and now the rest of life was assured in these very satisfying surroundings.

It is not surprising then, to find in the annals of St. Rose's Home in the city and Rosary Hill Home out at Hawthorne, many passages that illustrate the hopefulness and even the joyous humor of the patients in spite of the fact that they realized so well that they were carrying "the body of this death" around with them. A department in *Christ's Poor* to which there were frequent contributions in the early years bore the caption, strange

as it might seem to be, in the journal of cancer homes: "Comical Sayings of Old Ladies."

Most of these represent quite unconscious humor, but a good many of them had no humor at all so far as the old ladies themselves were concerned, but had a very humorous side and not infrequently some very definite comic relief for those who were taking care of them. Sometimes these comical sayings were not so comical at the time they were uttered as they proved to be afterward. Distance often lends enchantment in these cases. Sometimes the crankiness of the old ladies was the greatest element of their humor. It is well that the good Sisters saw the humor of the situation, for that made many expressions, at which offense might have been taken by more sensitive souls, have a deeper appeal to their charity and to their tender solicitude to make the patients as comfortable as possible.

These expressions represent the relief background of the cancer work for Mother Alphonsa and her companions and make it clear that so far from everything being solemn and serious as a great many people would surely have expected under the trying circumstances, on the contrary, light-hearted cheerfulness as a rule replaced the melancholy tenor of life that might seem to be inevitable with death already making its sure advances against the lives of the patients. A collection of these sayings as they come to us from the pen of Mother Alphonsa herself deserve a place in this account:

"We have an old woman with a bad cancer, who frequently makes very comical remarks. She has been with us for quite a little time now, and feels that her word must

be the law of the place. Several times during the day, the Sisters assemble in the little chapel for the hours of Office. She could not understand why we prayed except in the morning and evening. So, one day she said to me, with quite a confidential air: 'Now, Sister, don't you think yourself it would be more sensible to say your prayers all at one time, instead of having them in pieces as you do?'

"There was an old woman who came to our Relief Room [out-patient department] every day for quite a long time. She had two very sore legs, and after dressing them, we usually gave her some assistance [Mother's gentle expression for alms]. She depended on the charity of the neighborhood and was about as happy as a person of her disposition could be. After a while she made up her mind to settle, and came to live with us for a few months. She handed the Superior a small bundle, very much wrapped up, and told her that it was money intended for her funeral, and that it amounted to $40.00. The money was laid aside in a secure place, and for a few weeks all went well; then, after a good rest, the old lady began to fear that everything that came into the house was bought with her $40.00. However, the climax was reached when a small organ was placed in the chapel. She looked at it fiercely, and turning to the woman in the room with her, exclaimed: 'When I came in they had nothing. Now they can buy pianneys!'

"We thought we were fortunate in having an Irish fairy tale book among a number of volumes sent to us for our patients, and gave it to the old Irish lady who can read without glasses at eighty. She sits all day by a front

window in 'St. Vincent de Paul's room,' bowed over, but peering up with a white, powerful face, and dark eyes under black eyebrows. She said with clear-toned scorn that she wanted 'a book with prayers in it'; but after a glance or two at the pages she realized that Ireland includes both fairies and saints, and probably renewed friendship with many an old legend. The lives of the saints, however, are much appreciated by her, and she reads them by the hour, with a scrutinizing attention to the small boys on Cherry Street kept up diligently, for their antics are varied and daring enough to watch with care. 'Those boys,' as the old lady calls them in accents of bitter amazement, have contributed greatly to her health. Although she is severe and unsentimental even in her devotions, we notice an extreme courage in crossing the room to come close to the Chapel during Mass or Benediction, and her beads are never beyond her reach without a decided stir being made. It is therefore surprising to hear her exclaim, in indignation, as if she had been buried alive for weeks, and uttering this demand in the lulls of noise when the Sisters are trying to snatch an interval for quiet prayer in the adjacent Chapel: 'Is it Sunday or Monday? I do wish somebody would tell me!'

"One old lady has just died, who was so shrunken with age that her chair nearly swallowed her, but who managed to win great distinction as a dynamic force. It is one of our best victories that she died an admirable death, gentle and devout. Nevertheless, she made somewhat easy stages towards this termination in acquiring perfection. The Sisters have learned that a pretty shawl or a cup of

something tasty will bridge over a rough place, and silently respond to injuries in some such way. But this dear old morsel was not to be caught without a struggle. A volume of abuse elicited not a word, one day, but some nice broth was handed to her. 'Oh, yes! You drag me here against my will, and now you try to get around me with broth, do you!' she cried. 'But you can't make up with me so easily!' Did she drink it? Every drop. Soon she insisted upon being kissed at each 'goodnight' by her attendant, like a child.

"If we sometimes wonder whether the poor often want our poor labors, we are always soon reassured. A face case came, an old, old woman, who had lost the side of her face, and refused to have the wound covered in any way. Altogether, she was an agony to everybody. But she had to be received, for reiterated reasons of mercy. She was very devout, and had that dignity of a sincere soul in tragical condition, which speaks through every obliteration. She was so devout that her deafness and difficulty of speaking, which prevented her from going to confession, and also the impossibility of her swallowing the Sacred Host, became sources of misery to her, and every annoyance which she felt was thus enhanced in importance. If the fire was brightened up, she was too hot, and if it was cooled off, she felt injured. On all occasions, and they were frequent, when she was displeased, she raised a deep, stentorian voice that was almost inarticulate, crying out that she 'wanted to go away.' Late in the evening was the time which she preferred for this announcement, and she would emerge, blind and tottering, from the little ward, rest her hand upon the banis-

ters of the stairs, and howl, 'I want to go away!' At last her niece was persuaded to take rooms in which she could nurse the old lady. When our patient was told that this niece, a hard, low, plausible creature with a face to fear, would take her home, she became still as death. Her poor, dear mind had readjusted itself and she saw that she had made a fatal mistake; but was too decent to complain of her niece. In a little while, however, she asked if we would ever take her back. 'Yes, indeed,' was the loving answer."

And they did, after the chastening experience of lack of sympathy that came to her had calmed her disposition and made her more amenable to hospital discipline. When she returned she was a changed being though there was still the fire in her eye on occasions that showed it was real self-repression that she was exercising.

Besides the old ladies, the old gentleman could sometimes be very comical. Mother Alphonsa herself has told something of that story in preceding chapters but there has been preserved for us a letter written to Mother Alphonsa by the old men congratulating her on her feast day, which gives an excellent idea of the maternal and filial relations which existed in the home. We give it in its own inimitable misspelling, its frequent capitalization and its total lack of punctuation:

"August 2, 1908

"Mother Alphonsis

"Rev. Mother

"We the male paitents of the Rosery Hill home this being the Feast of your patron Saint Takes this Opertunity of Congratualing you on the grand work you are doing

for us poor men and women that the great allmighty seen fit to afflect with a Terriable disace or Plauge [plague] but kind Mother and kind Sisters what would be the condition of some of these poor men and women only for home like this with saintly Mother and Sisters and the Consolation of our holy Church at all times sourounding you now Dear Mother in conclusion the following poor patiants Sends you their gratitude and congratualations and wishes the Sisters and yourself and this home to live many many years and that God may prosper your work and that when the great allmighty calls you home to that home beond the Clouds he will have Bright Crowns of Gold waiting for you there where their is no more pain or trouble but all happiness for ever is the wish of Jas J Spearing and all the other patiants the following Patiants wishes the following John Burns that God may Spare you to continue the good work Wm Launders I pray for you night and morning Peter O'Brien prays for you night and morning to live long with the grace of a happy death Wm Harrington will offer up his next holy communion and pray for you Walter Thompson wishes you to live a long life to save souls as well ease bodys the Balance of the men Says they wish you a long life and that God will keep you in the same good work."

A number of people who are not familiar with the true spirit of the life of religious seem very much inclined to think that members of the Catholic Sisterhoods laugh only very rarely and very quietly. They are persuaded that it is a definite rule among the Sisters not to give way to gayety and that anything beyond a placid smile would be

considered almost unpardonable levity. Quite needless to say for those who are familiar with Sisters as they actually are, any such impression is entirely mistaken. Those who are not familiar with them may continue to think that the Sisters pull long solemn faces and, according to their rules, maintain that facial guise all the time. A few are even inclined to think that only as Sisters thus repress anything like gayety are they able to continue in their religious life. A recent illustration of this feeling has been the subject of no little merriment on the part of Sisters who have heard the story. Not long since a very clever young woman from the south who had never been in contact with Sisters was hurt by an automobile and spent several weeks in a Sisters' hospital. She told me afterwards how much she had enjoyed her experience with the Sisters in spite of the fact that it was an injury that forced the contact upon her. She confided to me, however, in a whisper almost, so that she might not give scandal, "Those Sisters laugh," and then she added so as to make assurance doubly sure, so that there might be no question but that this utterly unexpected event had taken place, "I heard them." The Sisters of that hospital laughed heartily when I told them this story.

Mother Alphonsa herself before she became a religious knew very well how different was the actual tenor of life of Sisters from any such mistaken notion. She wrote under the title of *A Story of Courage* the history of the Georgetown convent of the Visitation, the second oldest convent in the United States. The first words in the preface to her volume are, "As cheerful as a nun." She adds that the phrase is used by those who know nuns the

best "to express the acme of serenity, light-heartedness and the sweetest good spirits" which characterize Sisters in their contact with those around them. Mrs. Lathrop did not hesitate even to rise to the climax. "Indeed there are no happier or cheerier persons on earth than the members of religious sisterhoods."

That is what the patients at the cancer home found to be true, as might so well have been expected under the circumstances, with regard to Mother Alphonsa herself and the Sister Servants of Relief founded by her. It is not surprising, then, to learn that there was wit and humor around the house and joy and cheerfulness on occasion, and that the good Sisters instead of discouraging this, on the contrary encouraged it in every way and, indeed, often were the leaders in it.

Pleasure and pain are incompatible, but pain and joy may go together, and happiness be not far away. Mother Alphonsa used to like to think of Dante's *Purgatorio* in which there was so much of human happiness though accomplished by such heights of pain. Indeed, the line between sorrow and happiness in this vale of tears is a very slight one. Whenever any one is supremely happy there are tears in his or her eyes, and that highest of happiness which floods a mother's heart for a son who has returned unharmed from the midst of danger is always expressed in tears. The less hope there has been for his safe return, the more joyful and the more copious a mother's tears are likely to be. Many a cancer patient, encouraged by the Sister nurses around, laughed through his or her tears at some of the comical sayings of the old ladies in the wards and many an old lady came to see the

joke for herself after the humor of it had passed through the alembic of Mother Alphonsa's charming sense of cheerfulness and humorous appreciation.

Above all, Mother Alphonsa hoped to train her young Sisters in such a cheerful state of mind in the midst of their deterrent occupation of caring for these sometimes almost hideous-looking patients that their cheerfulness would react favorably on the patient. What they needed above all was human sympathy. Most of us are rather disturbed by sickness and at best it produces in us that feeling of self-pity which is so likely to break down morale. When a fellow mortal is ready to show that he suffers with us, as the etymology of the word sympathy shows, then there is a lifting up of our hearts that helps us to bear our troubles better than before. Smiling faces, gayety of heart, joy of expression even in the midst of trying conditions, these represented the fruits of the training of Mother Alphonsa's young daughters in religion. Her own innate cheerfulness of character and joy of expression were the best possible lessons that her Sisters could have been given.

It would be easy for some people to think that this training of joy and cheerfulness represented a modern development in the religious life, but any such thought will not come to any one who knows the old traditions with regard to the training of young religious. The oldest definition of a novice that we have, and it is said to be now nearly a thousand years old, emphasizes, above all, the lightness of heart and gayety which has always characterized the young religious, both male and female. That definition runs as we have it in the original Latin, "*qui*

frangit pocula, et fundit oleum et cacchinat." To translate, "A novice is a creature who breaks crockery, spills oil and giggles" (cacchinates). Mothers Superior will still tell you that the novices break crockery because their hands are so light in intimate connection with their hearts that dishes must perforce sometimes find their way out of them, and while they do not spill oil nearly so much as before (except the sacristan's), they waste electricity, and above all they still giggle.

This was the atmosphere that was created for the patients in Mother Alphonsa's homes and it did them much good mentally and often also physically, even in cases where medical science had declared their ailments hopeless and that nothing further could be done except prepare them to die. No one would have disagreed so thoroughly with this pronouncement of medical science as the patients who felt themselves ever so much better in the atmosphere of Mother Alphonsa's homes.

How much the home meant for some of the patients who were brought to it will be readily understood by some quotations from the accounts of early experiences as they appeared from time to time in *Christ's Poor*. Here, for instance, is the description of a patient referred to Mother Alphonsa by an Episcopalian deaconess which illustrates this very well. The poor patient had been living under conditions that made her ailment doubly disturbing. At the home she was put in circumstances that at once removed more than half her pain by eliminating the greater part of her solicitude:

"The poor sick smile under our care, even if they have been said to be dying when we take them to our homes.

Success breathes in our endeavor, for it is a work modelled upon established success, though of an ancient type, in the early hospitals of Christianity.

"I will describe a scene to which I was called by an Episcopalian deaconess. It seemed to me that the sick woman came as near to me in relationship as my own sister. Her agony aroused in me a sense of the truth, since before God she was my sister.

"She was lying upon a hard, hair-covered lounge, and the single pillow under her head was dark with uncleanliness. Over her was spread a 'comforter' that was a mere rag, cheap, soiled and torn. Anything was good enough for her. On a chair by her side stood a broken cup holding worthless tea, and near her lingered her young son of about eighteen years of age, who wished she was already dead, and slipped out of the room in a few moments. A nauseating atmosphere struck the senses, which was due in great measure to the absence of proper treatment. Her own breath was stifled, and her face glistened with the swelling and the sweat of agony. Her eyes glared forth in horror, and seemed to demand that a human being should arise to give her aid.

"One arm was enormous. The side, where an heroic operation had been performed, had around it a rocky wall of bandages left on for a week, and not to be described. It would hardly be wise to give the true details of her experiences, only too clearly corroborated by similar testimonies.

"In two hours, however, she was to be seen in our tenement home in Water Street, and smilingly said, 'it is heaven.' "

One of Mother Alphonsa's favorite ideas was that the experience obtained by the Servants of Relief in their care of their destitute sufferers from cancer would enable them to determine just what mode of treatment would prove to be the best for cancer patients when they were approaching the end of existence. When she began her work, though even physicians were not quite aware of the actual facts, nearly 100,000 patients died every year in this country from cancer. Thirty years later, at her death, experts had learned that there were many more than 100,000 who died from cancer every year. It was well worth while then to determine just what would be best for these patients so as to make life as comfortable as possible. Mother Alphonsa hoped to determine not only how best to relieve pain but also to obviate the odor from the putrefactive processes which so often occur in connection with the disease. This serves to make the patients a noisome presence not only to others but particularly to themselves, for they feel very poignantly the discomfort that they must be to others on account of the offensive smell from their breaking-down tissues.

Mother Alphonsa found in her early experience that some of the surgical dressings and even modes of treatment that were recommended by physicians seemed to do more harm than good. Above all, they complicated the condition and had some very disturbing sequelæ in the degenerative agglutination of tissues produced. Most of the attempts of the patients themselves to care for their condition were, as might have been expected, unfortunate in their effects. Mother hoped to be able to standardize the care of these patients so that they might pass on the

inevitable road that ended in death from cancer with as little discomfort as possible. Undoubtedly the continuous experience of the home in these cases will do much to accomplish this purpose that was so prominent in Mother Alphonsa's mind. There is thus a true humanitarian outlook to her foundation, in the sense that its underlying idea is to relieve and console the patients even though it may not be able to cure them. The old medical aphorism runs that "physicians can seldom cure, but they can often relieve and they can always console." The consolation afforded to her patients proved a very striking remedial measure for the relief of their worst pains. That cheerfulness itself became after a time one of the most important therapeutic factors in the care of these poor suffering patients.

Another favorite idea of Mother Alphonsa was that there might be such an organization of women in various parts of the large cities as would foster the care, not only of incurable cancer cases, but also of chronic illnesses of other kinds. She recalled the history of hospitals in the olden times when women of the better classes made it a rule to spend a couple of hours or more every week in visitation of the sick. Nothing does so much good to the patient but also to the benefactress as this personal contact. The signing of checks is necessary for the support of a charity, but personal service makes the whole world kin in a way that nothing else does. In her article on "The Objects of the Work" frequently repeated in numbers of *Christ's Poor,* Mother Alphonsa dwells on considerations of this kind which serve to show how much our modern social service might be linked up with old-

fashioned Christian charity. In April, 1904, she quoted in this regard Frederic Ozanam, whose foundation of the conferences of St. Vincent de Paul proved such a living charity in the modern time. Ozanam said:

"Help honors, when, to the bread that nourishes, it adds the visit that consoles, the advice that enlightens, the friendly shake of the hand that lifts up the sinking courage; when it treats the poor man with respect not only as an equal, but as a superior, since he is suffering what (perhaps) we are incapable of suffering; since he is the messenger of God to us, sent to prove our justice and our charity, and to save us by our works."

Mother Alphonsa herself came to recognize very clearly the element of personal sacrifice that was needed if enduring good for mankind was to be accomplished. Twenty-five years ago she chose a quotation from Bishop Potter, the Episcopal bishop of New York, which shows that she recognized how thoroughly that friend of the poor realized that the only method that would bring about reform in mankind is not legal regulation but personal conviction and self-denial. James Russell Lowell once said that old-fashioned truths often form a commentary on the morning paper. This would seem to be eminently true of Mother Alphonsa's quotation from Bishop Potter:

"Many people think that harmony would be brought about through the passing of laws to compel people to do this or that and to prevent their doing certain other things. That is not the way in which the republic was founded nor in which present evils can be righted. The republic was founded through personal sacrifice upon the

basis of human brotherhood. The need today is that men shall rise above mere selfishness."

Mother Alphonsa liked to take quotations "from those who had given deep thought to spiritual matters" because so often their expressions represented formulas that condensed an immense amount of thought and experience into a few brief words. It is easy to understand how deep an appeal to the superior of homes for incurable cancer patients this expression of St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, the recently canonized foundress of the Madames of the Sacred Heart, would have: "There is nothing on earth so near heaven as Calvary."

Personal suffering and the personal care for those who are in deep suffering, the being on Calvary one's self or accompanying others there, brings humanity nearer to the solution of the mystery of life's relations with eternity than anything else in the world. The great mystery of evil loses most of its baffling content when human beings devote themselves to the alleviation of suffering and to the consolation of sufferers, and when they learn how much doing this means for their personal satisfaction and uplift.

Mother Alphonsa's own experience taught her how much of enduring courage was needed to persist in that sacrifice of self which is so absolutely required if one is to accomplish good for one's self and others by the care of the ailing. Manifestly her meditations and her spiritual readings often brought her formulas that expressed this and she jotted them down in order that they might be at hand for helpfulness at moments of trial. We find some of them here and there in the pages of *Christ's Poor.*

They were evidently used once or oftener in her conferences to her community and were set down for future reference. After all, one of the objects of greatest solicitude for her was the training in the life of the spirit of the young women who volunteered to give themselves to the work of taking care of the incurable cancer poor.

In February, 1904 (*Christ's Poor*), she quoted from John of Avila, the great Spanish mystical writer, a master of spirituality and yet so thoroughly practical in his ways that St. Teresa found him of the greatest help as an adviser. Mother's quotation from him was:

"Those who give themselves to God must have a lion's heart."

Another favorite source of quotation of Mother Alphonsa was St. Vincent de Paul, the great French saint of charity who saved so many children from suffering and death and rescued so many of the ailing poor, the victims of war in his time. Considering Mother's own work for the unfortunate, it is not surprising to find among her favorite quotations, that one from St. Vincent:

"I am for God and the poor."

Only a few years before Mother Alphonsa made that quotation, Louis Pasteur, the great French bacteriologist who had *saved* more lives than any other man who ever lived, facing his own death at the age of seventy-three, had asked that the life of St. Vincent de Paul should be read to him sometimes during the terminal days of life, because he felt that the one thing that made life seem worth while having been lived now that he was at the end of it, was that like St. Vincent he, too, had saved the

lives of children and the ailing poor and made life ever so much happier for them than had been possible before.

Toward the end of her life it was very clear to those of us who knew her even a little intimately, that Mother Alphonsa was looking back, glad that the latter half of her life had so well exemplified that expression of St. Vincent:

"I am for God and the poor."

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

ANOTHER MODE OF CHARITY

While the good Sister Servants for the Relief of Cancer were deeply occupied with the, for them, all-important problem of caring for their incurable patients, that occupation did not absorb all their attention and they found themselves called upon from time to time to care for others who might apply for their charity. Theirs was no exclusive preoccupation with one problem, attention to which was exaggerated to such a degree that they could not see other ills around them for which some good might be accomplished. Almost needless to say during the vicissitudes of the years there were over and over again periods of hard times during which a good many men were out of work and some of them found themselves under the necessity of leaving home and wandering far afield. Almost needless to say there were at the same time a number of men whom the *Wanderlust* tempted to tramp from place to place, prompting them to withdraw from the obligations of life and get a living as best they might by well-directed appeals to those whom they met.

Rosary Hill Home, at Hawthorne, had not been long established before the tramps who find Westchester County a favorite resort at certain seasons of the year, came to realize that the good Sisters had a tender spot in their hearts for the wandering journeyman and that a

satisfactory meal might be rather readily obtained from them. Mother Alphonsa's reaction to these applicants for her bounty who are sometimes declared to be the typical problem of present-day civilization, is interesting. After some five years of experience she set her thoughts about them down in her little article "Tramps: or the First Blue Birds" in *Christ's Poor.*[1]

It is easy to understand that any one so tenderhearted as she was would surely find something good to say of these wanderers of the days and nights and even search out some justification for their failure to be as other men, though of course she was entirely too practical a New Englander to allow herself to be imposed on. Many a hobo then came to appreciate the kindness that he knew he would find at the kitchen door of Rosary Hill Home. Almost needless to say in the hard times they found their way there in goodly numbers. None of them, any more than the multitudes who, forgetful of their bodily wants, had followed Christ out on the hillsides of Judea, went away hungry. She looked upon this brother man who sometimes seems a caricature of humanity with all a sister's readiness to see only the best in him and make every allowance for his shortcomings:

"When Spring opens, or when it ought to open, there comes a long-lost friend to the door of the year; and if he is well treated, he duplicates himself, until nine tramps for dinner are a fact. It is perfectly true that this charity was not established for tramps, but for people who could not walk. The first thought on seeing a man in rags who asks for a meal, is to consign him to the ash-

[1] 1904.

heap. But if one asks him a question, one is lost. He proves to be a human being, not a piece of tin or old scrap iron. Speak further to him, and you feel as sorry as you ever did in your life, and would like to get him steady work, and develop that kind soul of his. Or, if he is rather well-dressed, your indignation at his begging is swept away by discovering that he really can get no work, and therefore merit is in distressing inactivity and hunger, which is a most abnormal state of things. If the tramp is evidently an habitual drunkard, the sincerity of his avowal of his cowardly enslavement is gently pitiable; but if he says he never tastes liquor, you have the pleasure of giving way to just criticisms. If he is dangerously unprincipled 'on the face of it,' one can prevent his going on with repeated visits, by asking him if he had been present at any enactments of crime. One of these rascals told a Sister that some people were very wicked, and that there were 'ever so many murders at White Plains that never were discovered.'

" 'Were you present?' she asked.

" 'What?' he demanded, staring.

" 'Did you ever see one of those murders in White Plains?'

"He looked to right and left, and stuttered out, 'Of course not.' But he did not come again for coffee and scraps.

"However, a great many of the ragged roadsters are not by any means abominable men, and they eat well, and turn out a little convenient job admirably, for fifty cents a day. The tramp table is rough but ready; and we have found it to be as the Fathers [these would be the Domini-

can Fathers who had occupied the house before] said, as they drew away their monastic influence from the Hill, 'Be nice to the tramps, but not too nice.' They have turned out to be very friendly; but a very good meal is telephoned about, as if it were stocks, the rise or fall of a pudding being of sensitive importance. Many a potato drill owes its excellent yield to the bowed back of tramps at the hoe. But their hands are sometimes very unused to the necessary implements for hoeing, or chopping of wood; and so, without leaving our work with a churlish silence of non-explanation, they kindly enter into particulars, and say that the job tires or hurts them too much.

"Poor, bewitched creatures, they have such a vast amount of good in them, no matter what has been their false reading of the rules of life." [3]

[3] Modern philanthropy is rather inclined to look askance at the feeding of tramps and the pauperization that goes with it, but Mother Alphonsa was following the custom of the old religious orders in the days when they were the refuges for travelers. Mr. Jacob Riis in his volume, *The Making of an American,* has told the story of his experience, when in need, with an institution ruled over by religious in that same part of New York State. He was nearly starving one day when he reached the gate of St. John's College, Fordham, then in Westchester County, and he has told the story of how much good the abundant meal that he received did for him:

"I reached Fordham College, famished and footsore. I had eaten nothing since the previous day, and had vainly tried to make a bath in the Bronx River do for breakfast. Not yet could I cheat my stomach that way.

"The college gates were open, and I strolled wearily in, without aim or purpose. On a lawn some young men were engaged in athletic exercises, and I stopped to look and admire the beautiful shade-trees and the imposing building. So at least it seems to me at this distance. An old monk in a cowl, whose noble face I sometimes recall in my dreams, came over and asked kindly if I was not hungry. I was in all conscience fearfully hungry, and I said so, though I did not mean to. I had never seen a real live monk before, and my Lutheran training had

not exactly inclined me in their favor. I ate of the food set before me, not without qualms of conscience, and with a secret suspicion that I would next be asked to abjure my faith, or at least do homage to the Virgin Mary, which I was firmly resolved not to do. But when, the meal finished, I was sent on my way with enough to do me for supper, without the least allusion having been made to my soul, I felt heartily ashamed of myself. I am just as good a Protestant as I ever was; but I have no quarrel with the excellent charities of the Roman Church, or with the noble spirit that animates them. I learned that lesson at Fordham thirty years ago." Many a Brother Christopher (the term that good Father Paul Francis of Graymoor employs for those wanderers for whom he has a special lodging farther up the river) if he had Mr. Riis' power of words would say the same thing of Mother Alphonsa's home at Hawthorne.

APPENDIX II

THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF

THE funeral sermon for Mother Alphonsa was preached by the Very Reverend James A. Walsh, superior of the Foreign Missionary Seminary at Maryknoll, not far from Hawthorne. He had known her for many years and appreciated deeply all the precious values of her sublime charity. He had shared her experience and the difficulties that must be overcome by the founder of a religious community for a special purpose. He had given up a pastoral charge to devote himself entirely to the foundation of the Foreign Missionary Society of America which prepares young men for missions in China. Probably no one was better fitted to appreciate properly the true inwardness of Mother Alphonsa's religious life than this organizer, in the face of many obstacles and difficulties, of the foreign mission movement in this country. His funeral sermon was not a panegyric but a plain and simple exposition of a noble life and its accomplishment. It might be called a eulogy in the sense of the Greek etymology of that term for he spoke the "good word" of Mother Alphonsa. That eulogy properly finds a place as a fitting conclusion for Mother Alphonsa's life as it sums up the meaning of her career as seen through the eyes of a sympathetic admirer, whose own experience enabled him so well to appreciate its significance:

" 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole mind, with all thy soul and with all thy strength, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'

"Your Grace, Reverend dear Monsignori, Reverend Fathers and dear Friends among the laity:

"I wish that someone would stand in my place, someone more fully informed, better fitted, more worthy to interpret your feelings on this sad occasion. The life of this valiant woman, whose precious remains lie before us, would call for a poet or an historian, and I am neither. Neither would I attempt, even roughly, to sketch this life which is known to so many of you, and to some better than it is to myself.

"It has been my privilege and honor to be reckoned in the circle of her friends for the past fifteen years—since the day when on the brow of the hill below us we of Maryknoll undertook to establish our Bethlehem at Hawthorne—and since then she has been to us a friend in need and a friend in deed, and we have been the object of her prayers and of her charity. I look upon this task today as an opportunity to express my gratitude to her who has gone on, and as an opportunity to say of her that which I would not have dared to say to her.

"You will recall an occasion in the life of Our Lord when certain doctors of the law approached Him to make inquiries, some with the object of quizzing Him, others desirous of knowing the truth, and one who approached Him nearer said, 'Master, which is the first Commandment?' The question was a good one. The synagogues were in discussion then over trivial things, and the people wanted to know what to believe. Our Lord had only to

look at their phylacteries, the parchments on which were written the familiar words: 'Hearken, O you Israel, the Lord thy God is the only God. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole mind and with all thy soul and with all thy strength. This is the First Commandment, and the Second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' There are no greater Commandments than these. One would have had to live in those days, in the darkness of that age, to realize what that flash of light meant to sincere souls. It scattered the mists. It thrust aside the petty discussions. It bade the poor and the ignorant to know that what they were called upon to do was not to search the Scriptures, but that their duty was to consist in the love of God above all things, and in the love of their neighbor. This is what the single duty of life is, and we found it exemplified in the life of her whom we honor today. The world will speak of her and will praise her works of charity, but know that the service which this woman rendered to humanity was a service based directly on the love of God. This heart that stopped beating a few short hours ago was a great heart. It was a heart not limited to human affections. It was a heart open to the influx of God's grace and fully imbued with love of the Most Blessed Trinity—with love of God the Father Whose kind Providence watched so strikingly over her work; with love of Christ her Master, the Master of her household, the Companion of her days, her solace, the food of her life; with love of the Holy Ghost who inspired her in her daily undertakings, who comforted her, who strengthened her.

"She loved all with a heart full to overflowing, and she

loved God with her whole mind. The mind of Mother Alphonsa Lathrop was a mind that was trained from earliest childhood to the niceties of human thought and human speech. Those who have noted her letters have remarked her ability. I do not exaggerate when I say that she could have taken her place in the chronicles of American literature, but she sought higher things. Her mind flew to God; she gave it to Him; she diverted it to His purposes, and He accepted it, and she loved Him with her whole mind. All that she had she gave to this work that she founded, and what a work it was! To begin such a work called for courage, and it called for sublime faith in Divine Providence. To continue such a work called for the fullest that anybody could give, because every work in its beginnings has its great struggles and difficulties, and founders, such as she was, encounter opposition, oppression, coldness, indifference and a hundred trials never expected.

"Through twenty-five years or more she has labored offering her soul's love to her God, and she has given that body—not a strong one—to the work of God while it was day. She gave all that she had to the service of her Master, of her God. She loved Him with her whole soul as she loved Him with her whole mind and with all her strength, and she loved her neighbor as herself. Those who knew her know how fully she gave herself to others.

"Some months ago in Rome it was my privilege to receive counsel from one of the most saintly Cardinals of the Church. In speaking of the qualifications of a missioner he laid particular stress on the necessity of assimilation as he called it. He said that as Christ took upon

Himself the nature of man, so the missioner must assimilate, as far as he can without sin, the character of those among whom he has to labor. I noticed this 'assimilation' in Mother Alphonsa. Her heart went out so fully to those she served that she felt their sorrows and experienced their pains. What a work hers was from day to day, and how hard it is for us to realize it. Work for incurables. When one works to save the body, to rear an orphan child, to bring back a fallen woman, to help those who are blind or deaf or who cannot walk, this task we can understand more easily, and we can realize that even people without faith would be attracted to such work as that. With the incurable it is different. One watches the ebbing of life day after day; there is no turn of the tide; there are no visible results. Not from any natural motive did Mother Alphonsa do this work, but from the one motive of pleasing her God and of serving Him.

"Shortly after her conversion, I am told, the priest who was instrumental in bringing her conversion about, was occupied with very many duties. She asked him what kind of service she could render him that would be of assistance in his labors, and just at that time there was a young woman in the parish suffering from cancer—a bright young woman, intelligent, keen, ambitious, but poor, extremely poor—too poor to allow herself the opportunity to seek hospital aid where proper attention could be given her, and the only alternative were the institutions of the city, which she dreaded. The priest put this case before Mrs. Lathrop, and immediately Mrs. Lathrop said, 'Let me have that girl. I will support her and take care of her,' and that was the beginning of this work. Since that

time scores and hundreds have found their way to the heart of this woman—have been embraced by her and taken care of by her for the love of God.

"Today we see the close of a life that was led in Christ for His needy ones. Her life is a light to us. 'The city sitteth on the mountains drawing us up to the heights of God.' Her reward, we think, should be exceedingly great when we consider the promise of Christ that even a cup of water given in His name will not go unrewarded. The world will judge as to the valuation of the service which she has rendered to humanity. God has already judged. What is the verdict? Where is her soul? Is it in the Beatific Vision? I know not, neither do you. Under the light of God's countenance rare is the soul that goes from earth and finds itself pure. This we know that she who has died can no longer merit for herself, and here lies our opportunity to pray and offer the Holy Sacrifice for her soul that she may soon be with her God, if she is not already with Him.

"And you my Sisters: Others will recall her memory, but you must think of her, as you will, day after day. Your foundress has not gone from you. You will not see your mother's blessed body again until the Day of General Judgment, but your mother's spirit is with you, and you will be the subject of her prayers and her intercession. Fear not! Your work will prosper. She has laid a sound foundation and you will build thereon and continue the work she has begun.

"May sweet Jesus have mercy on her soul, strengthen you in your loss and bring her speedily to His Blessed Arms in heaven!"

INDEX

Activity and rest, the question of, 151
Alcott, 153
Alexis, C.P., Father, 206
Allston, Washington, 27
Along the Shore, 8
Angel in the House, The, 38
Anodynes, coal-tar, 237
Armenia, 124
Arnold, Mrs., 165
Art, Italian, 55
  religious, 56
Atlantic Monthly, The, 8, 14, 43, 70
Auxiliary, drug, 197
  organization of, 160
Avila, John of, 254

Becket, Miss Maria A., 166
Bellevue Hospital, 135, 138, 140, 141
Benedict XV, Pope, 198, 202
Berlin, 156
Blackwell's Island, 68, 132, 222
Boadicea, 25
Brooklyn Bridge, 75
Browning, Elizabeth Barrett, 28, 52

Cancer cures so-called, 236
Cancer frequency in men, 127
  frequency in women, 127
  mortality, 17, 250
  patients, burial of, 174
Capuchin Fathers, 183
Carnegie Hall, 189
Carroll legacy, 205
Cassidy, Monsignor, 205
Casterot, O.P., Father Alexis, 164
Centennial of Hawthorne and Longfellow, 210
Century, 26, 28
Champlain Educator, The, 166
Channing, 27, 153
Charity Organization Society, 131
Chaucers in charity, 118
Cherry, Rev. Joseph B., 219
Cherry Street home, the, 103, 182, 192, 195
Christ's Poor, 73, 83, 104, 116, 129, 149, 161, 170, 175, 217, 218, 221, 225, 230, 238, 248, 251, 253, 254, 260
City That Was, The, 72
Clemens, Samuel L., 170, 172
Cleveland election, first, 27
College, Bowdoin, 210
  Columbus, 193, 200, 202
  Fordham, 262
  Hobart, 99
  Kenyon, 99
  Manhattan, 164
  St. John's, 262
Community, growth of, 184
Concord, 31, 35, 46, 153
Conrad, Father, 185
Convent of the Visitation (Georgetown), 245
Cook, Abigail, 66
Corlears Park, 74, 76, 105, 218
Corrigan, Archbishop, 182, 183, 186
Cothenay, Father, 185
Crimmins, John D., 182
Cronin, Cornelius F., 190, 193, 194, 196, 197, 199, 200
Cuba, 120
Cummings, Mrs. Stephen, 190
Curtis, George William, 27
  H. Holbrook, 199

Cusack, Bishop, 187, 196, 197, 198, 200, 202, 203

Damien, O.P., Father, 164
Dante, 165, 225, 246
Davidson, Joshua, 66
de Kay, Helena, 67
De Profundis, 35
de Vere, Aubrey, 53
Diary, the community, 180
Dominican Congregation of St. Rose of Lima, 184
Doughty, 27

Egan, Maurice Francis, 24, 59, 60
Elizabeth of Hungary, Queen, 119
Emerson, 28, 153
  Mrs., 46
Empress Frederick, 118
Espousals, 38
Eucharistic League, the, 163
Eve of Pentecost, 139
Evil, mystery of, 253

Falconio, Archbishop, 190
Fanshawe, 28
Farley, Archbishop, 188, 190
  Cardinal, 194, 195, 196, 198, 203
Fatigue, mental and physical, 149
Ford, Miss, 165
Foreign Missionary Society of America, 264
Francis, Father Paul, 263
Freeman's Journal, The, 165

Gallery, the Staffa, 56
Gate of Heaven Cemetery, 172
Gesammelte Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiete der Oeffentlichen Medicin und der Seuchenlehre, 157
Gilder, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Watson, 7, 59, 67
Glendower, Owen, 25
Goethe, 16
Goodrich, Samuel Griswold, 33
Grand Street Ferry, 102
Greene, J. Warren, 165, 182, 190, 194, 197, 198, 201

Harper, F., 165, 166, 192
  Miss Elizabeth, 187
Hawthorne, Elizabeth, 33
  family, 23, 45, 152
  Grandmother, 37
  Julian, 14, 15, 26, 27, 29, 35, 37, 39, 44, 70
  Nathaniel, 7, 23, 28, 31, 32, 33, 45, 46, 51, 53, 64, 152, 210
  Rose, 15, 17, 23, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 54, 56
  Sophia Peabody, 25, 30, 32, 35, 44, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 57
  Una, 45, 49, 52, 66
Hayes, Archbishop, 205
  Cardinal, 210
  Monsignor, 194
Heckscher, John G., 191
Hickey, Rev. Timothy A., 163, 165, 166
Hill Country, 56
Hill, Father Edmund, 189, 201
Hillard, George, 27
History of Nursing, 11
History of the Popes, 32
Hoar, 153
  Elizabeth, 56
Holy Innocents, Church of, 165
Home of St. Rose of Lima, 138
Honors conferred on Mother Alphonsa, 199, 210, 211
Hospital, Memorial, 13, 82
  Misericordia (Dublin), 238
  Montauk, 121, 125
  New York Cancer, 13, 82
Hospitals, degradation of, 11
Huber, Miss Rose, 99

Influenza epidemic, 204
Isle of Man, the, 47

Jackson Street home, the, 193, 195
Jerdan, William, 48
Job, 178
Johnson, Dr., 48
Jones, O.P., Father Stephen, 164
Joseph, Father, 183
Jubilee celebration, silver, 208
Judea, 260

Keane, O.P., Father, 192
Kelly, Father, 168

Lathrop, George Parsons, 8, 153
  Rose Hawthorne, 7, 8, 12, 14, 16, 59, 72, 82, 99, 128, 152, 153, 170, 171, 268
Laws, tenement house, 11
Lazarus, Miss Emma, 67
  Josephine, 68
Lenox, 37, 44
Lisbon, 38
Liverpool, 37, 39, 50
Logan, Father, 186, 187
Longfellow, 139, 173, 210
Lothrop, Mrs. Daniel, 153
Lowell, James Russell, 252
Luther, 32

Macaulay, Lord, 32
Madames of the Sacred Heart, 57, 253
Madeira, 38
Mangan, James Clarence, 238
Mann, Horace, 26
Marinaro, Father, 165
Maryknoll, 265
Mason, Miss, 111, 113
McEntyre, George B., 202, 206, 207, 208
  Rev. James T., 183, 196, 197, 200, 202, 219
  Rt. Rev. Monsignor, 207, 209, 213, 219
McGean, Monsignor, 189, 191, 194, 195, 201
McNicholas, O.P., Rev. John Y., 191
Medieval monasteries, chronicles in, 180, 181
Memorial Hospital, 13, 82
Memories of Hawthorne, 8, 24, 40, 41, 44, 54, 55, 56
Mercier, O.P., Very Rev. Alexander, 164, 167
Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., 10
Milmore, 173
  Mrs. Mary Longfellow, 173
Misericordia Hospital (Dublin), 238
Montauk Hospital, 121, 125
Mooney, Monsignor, 194
Mosher, Mrs. Warren E., 166
Mosses from the Old Manse, 34

National Institute of Social Sciences, Committee and Council of, 199
  Presentation Medal of, 199
New York Cancer Hospital, 13, 82
New York Times Book Review and Magazine, 59, 60
Newman, 24
Noonan, Father, 201
Notes of Travel, 64
Novice, definition of, 247
Nutting and Dock, Misses, 11

O'Brien, Judge Morgan J., 189
O'Connell, Cardinal, 206
O'Connor, James W., 193
Old Manse, 31, 34
Old Masters, 56
Opiates, 237
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Church of, 165
Our Old Home, 62
Ozanam, Frederick, 252

Paintings, Italian, 55
Palmer, General, 130
Pardow, S.J., Father, 188

Passionist Order, 187
Pasteur, Louis, 254
Pater, Walter, 24
Patmore, Coventry, 38
Pe-Boadie, 25
Peabody, Elizabeth, 26
  George, 25
  Mary, 26
  Professor Andrew, 26
  Sophia, 26, 28, 29, 36
Peabodys, the, 25
Perugia, 56
Peter Parley series, 33
Peter Parley's Universal History, 33
Peter's Pence, 191
Philadelphia, 17
Pierce, Franklin, 39
  General, 53
Pincian Hill, 53
Pius X, Pope, death of, 198
Poorhouse, dread of, 11
Potter, Bishop, 252
Potter's Field, 175
Protectory, Catholic, 85, 94
  Jewish, 202
Public Medicine and the History of Epidemics, 157
Purgatorio, 246

Ranke, 32
Red Cross, Society of the, 120
  work in Cuba, 122
Reel, Henry J., 189, 194, 197, 202
Reformation, the, 32
Riis, Jacob, 262, 263
Roman fever, 52
Rome, the art of, 55
  the heart of, 56
Roosevelt, President, 124, 204
Rosary Hill Home, 60, 160, 162, 164, 177, 188, 196, 205, 221, 228, 238, 259
Rosary Magazine, 218
"Rose of all the Hawthornes, the," 7, 30, 44
Rosebery, Lord, 135
Rotary Club medal, 211

Sacred Heart Free Home for Incurable Cancer, 17
Sadlier, Miss, 165
Sage, Mrs., 205
St. Benedict, 70
  Catherine of Siena, Church of, 165
  Dominic, Third Order of, 170, 183
  Francis of Assisi, lecture on, 162
  Hyacinth's Convent and School, 166
  Joseph's Seminary, 219
  Madeleine Sophie Barat, 253
  Michael's Monastery, 164
  Paul's (London), 217
  Peter, 117
  Peter's (New York City), 189, 200
  Peter's (Rome), 56
  Rose of Lima, 182
  Rose's Free Home for Incurable Cancer, 130, 132, 140, 142, 144, 182
  Rose's Settlement, 165
  Teresa, 254
  Teresa's Church, 219
  Vincent de Paul, 252, 254
  Vincent Ferrer's Convent, 163
  Vincent's Hospital, 140
Salem, 31, 34, 36
Salesian Fathers, 190
San Juan, hill of, 124
Scarlet Letter, The, 30, 35, 36, 37
Schrader, George F., 189
Scudo, 57
Servants of Relief for Incurable Cancer, 18, 43, 59, 70, 105, 108, 114, 143, 146, 149, 180, 182, 184, 221, 236, 250, 259
Shakespeare, 26
Shakespeares in charity, 118

Sheils, Dr. J. L., 194
Sheppard, Miss, 53
Sisters of Mercy, 238
Slums, New York, 72
Smith, Dr. Stephen, 72
Smith, Edward, 194, 200, 201, 209
Smyth, O.P., Rev. Patrick, 164
Spanish-American War, the, 116, 120
Stanley, Dean, 217
Starr, Theodore B., 182
Stevenson, 24
Stone, Father Fidelis, 100, 187, 189, 201
  Father Kent, 99
Storer, Dr. Horatio R., 144
Story of Courage, A, 245
Strong, Mrs. Eleanor Fearing, 190
Summer School in New London, 166

Talleyrand, 48
Tanglewood Tales, 37
Terence, 25
Tertiaries, Dominican, 183, 209
Thuente, O.P., Rev. Clement M., 176, 179, 183, 184, 187, 188, 189, 194, 209
Tiffany, Lieut. William, 125
Times, the, 192, 212
Trinitá dei Monti, convent of, 57
Tuohey, Father Edward, 188
Twain, Mark, 170

United States Public Health Bureau, 10
United States Public Health Reports, 17
Unitarians, 27

Valhalla, Church of, 164
Vanutelli, Cardinal, 193
Very, Jones, 27
Virchow, 156

Walsh, Dr. James J., 161, 162, 163, 165, 188, 189, 195, 209
  Very Reverend James A., 264
War, end of World, 204
  European, 197
  Spanish-American, 116, 120
  Wilson's declaration of, 201
Ward, Mrs., 52
Water Street home, the, 7, 103, 105, 177, 182
Watson, Mrs., 85, 87, 92, 93, 96, 97
Wayside, The, 152
Wikoff, Camp, 121
Williams, Mrs., 186
Wilson, O.P., Father E. A., 163, 191
Wilson, President, 201
Wonder Book, The, 37

DATE DUE

JUL
M

GAYLORD

PRINTED IN U.

De Paul Library, University of Saint Mary
Leavenworth, Kansas 66048

8865

Walsh Mother Alphonsa

BX 4705 L35 W3

BX
4705
L 35
W 3

8865

De Paul Library
Saint Mary College
4100 S. 4th Street
Leavenworth, Kansas 66048-5082